

MAY 2021

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F1 2021

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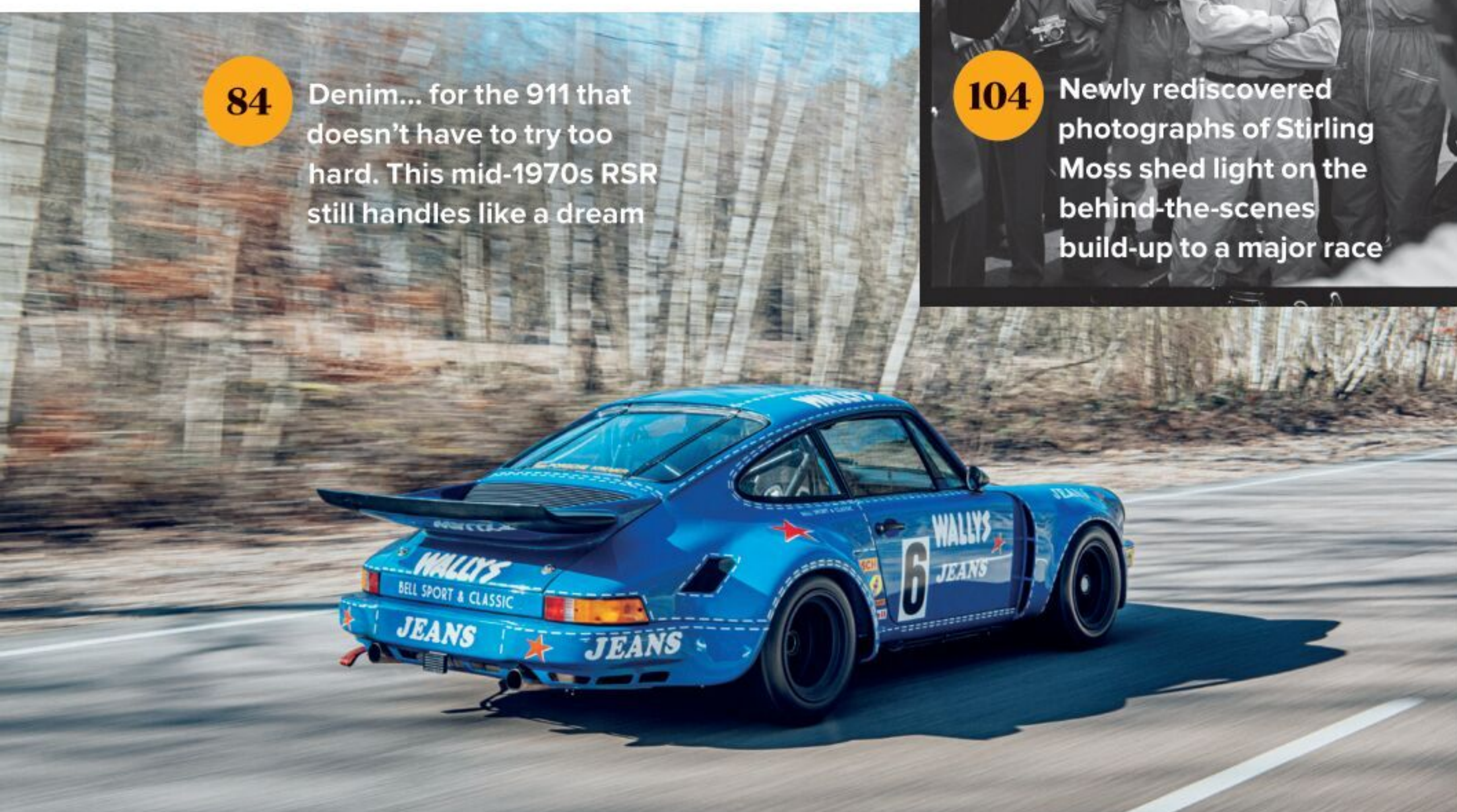
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MOTOR SPORT IS NOT ONLY dangerous, it is also ruthless. It is populated by competitive people with a burning desire to win - there is no room for sentiment. It is this ruthlessness that has earned Formula 1 the sobriquet of the Piranha Club, but other disciplines are no less hard-headed, perhaps none more so than rallying.

Remember Kris Meeke being sacked by Citroën in 2018? It wasn't just the sacking but the manner of it that had us wincing. Meeke was being booted out, said Citroën, because of his "excessively high number of crashes".

Last month, the axe fell equally mercilessly on one of the all-time great rally partnerships. It was announced that after 23 years together Sébastien Loeb, the nine-time world rally champion, was severing his partnership with co-driver Daniel Elena. The break-up appeared to be the result of a truly dreadful Dakar Rally for the pair in the Prodrive-built BRX1 car, which was marred with mechanical problems and navigational mistakes, which we discussed in detail in last month's magazine.

Loeb posted the news on his Instagram account: "After five Dakar rallies together - and after discussions with the team - we came to the conclusion that maybe it would be good to try something else."

Many saw the hand of Prodrive behind the announcement, not least Elena who swiftly responded with a social media post himself in the form of a video which showed him holding various race winning suits up to the camera while reflecting on his successes with Loeb over the years, with Citroën in the WRC and with Peugeot on the Dakar between 2016 and 2019.

He then takes aim at Prodrive: "They said 'Elena doesn't know how to navigate', 'Elena is bad, he loses Loeb too much time'. Before saying that, first listen to Elena. Your car is not built to win, your team is unstructured."

He goes on: "Your philosophy is simple: we are Prodrive, we are the greatest team in the world, we've won everything. But the last thing you won in the WRC was in 2003 with Solberg."

In keeping with the times he even managed to get in a good old-fashioned bit of Anglo-French baiting: "The English won the 100-year war with France, but hey, I am Monégasque, so I am sorry, but the war is not over."

All of which is good knockabout fun, but the fact is that it's hardly surprising Elena feels aggrieved. His partnership with Loeb was awesome. At the top of their game, the pair dominated the WRC for a decade and, as

THE EDITOR



"The English won the 100-year war with France but it is not over"



THIS MONTH'S COVER IMAGE:
It's 1992 and Ayrton Senna salutes after taking his fifth win at Monaco. Nigel Mansell chased him to the line
By Jean-Marc Follete/AP/
Shutterstock

someone worked out, won 44% of the WRC rounds they started together. They were also by all accounts close friends (a fact alluded to by Elena when he said he wouldn't let Prodrive's actions affect his friendship with the driver.)

But here's the thing: none of the above matters. While Elena's anger at Prodrive is understandable, it is clear that the break-up would not have happened had Loeb himself not sanctioned it.

At 47, Loeb's legacy as one of the greatest rally drivers of all time is assured but it is not enough. He wants more glory and no one, not even a loyal and faithful partner and friend is going to stand in his way. Because when push comes to shove, nine world titles count for very little. As I said, a ruthless business.

THIS MONTH WE CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF Murray Walker who sadly died in March. Despite the sadness, the overwhelming sense in the *Motor Sport* office was one of gratitude - for his support over the years and his enthusiasm for motor racing of all forms.

Murray was 97, which tempers the sadness with the knowledge that his was a long life lived well. There is no such solace in the news that Sabine Schmitz, the Queen of the Nürburgring, also died last month from cancer. She was 51. And as we go to press we hear of the death of Johnny Dumfries, age 62, the Scotsman who abandoned his aristocratic birthright to pursue a life of racing.

In a tale of riches to rags to riches he started out as a van driver for Frank Williams before dominating F3, partnering Senna at Lotus in F1 and winning Le Mans with Jaguar in 1988 before walking away from the sport.

We interviewed him at the end of last year in what turned out to be the last time he spoke in depth about his racing career. We asked him, what does he miss about the sport?

"You know, everyone always talks about missing the adrenaline, but it's not that. It's about the desire to compete and win, really close relationships, working with a team, living in that pressurised environment. That's irreplaceable and leaves a big hole."

The feeling's mutual.

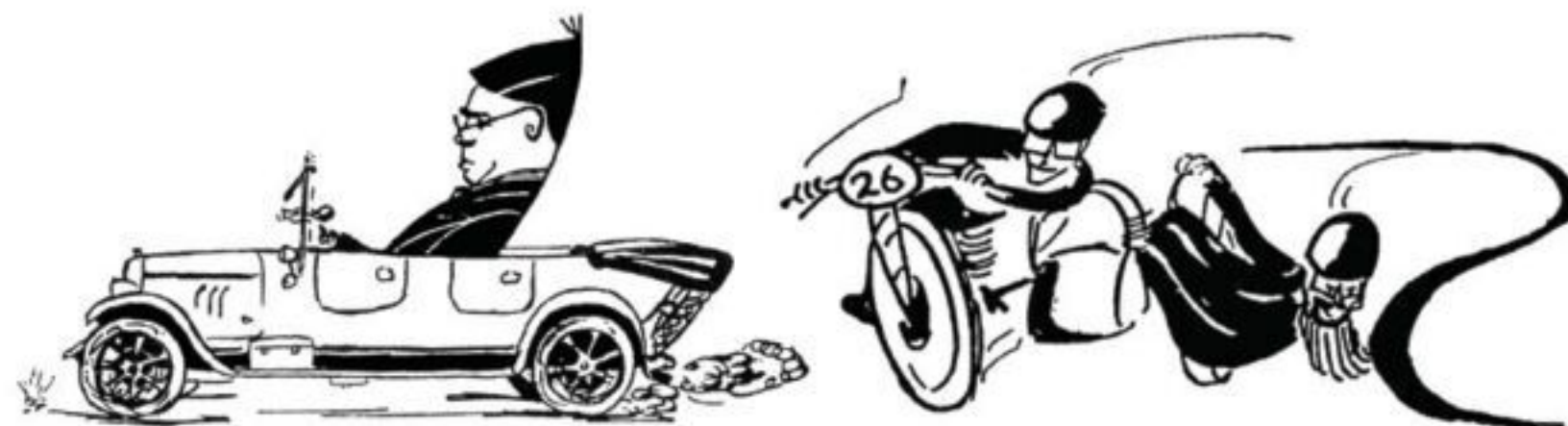
Joe Dunn

Joe Dunn, editor
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NEXT ISSUE: OUR JUNE ISSUE IS ON SALE FROM APRIL 28

MOTORSPORT

IN THE SPIRIT OF BOD AND JENKS



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Details matter.



A lunch with Stirling Moss 60 years ago launched the career of one of Fleet Street's most celebrated photographers. According to Elizabeth Ward, the wife of Michael Ward, her husband's passion for cars led him to ask Stirling for a meeting. The driver agreed and encouraged the young Ward to pursue his passion, even lending him his own camera and inviting him to document his upcoming race. We publish those images on page 104. Some of Ward's work is part of the National Portrait Gallery collection.

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MATTERS *of* MOMENT



SHUTTERSTOCK

The man who brought Formula 1 into our homes

Murray Walker's unique tones worked in perfect harmony with a revving race engine. **Simon Arron** bids farewell

IT IS ALMOST 20 YEARS SINCE HIS FORMAL retirement as a full-time commentator, but he never really abandoned the job completely. Still working at an age that the majority simply don't reach, Murray Walker was an institution, the like of which we might never see again. His death at 97 has left a huge hole in the fabric of motor sport - not just in the UK, but around the world.

With Murray, the passion you heard was 100% genuine - a by-product of his upbringing in a racing family.

Born in Hall Green, Birmingham, on October 10, 1923 - less than a year before *Motor Sport* made its bow - Murray was the son of motorcycle racer Graham Walker, winner of the 1931 Isle of Man Lightweight TT. He would go on to ride bikes at grassroots level - quite literally so, in some instances, as he competed at Brands Hatch when it was still just a field - though he enjoyed his greatest competitive successes in trials events.

It speaks volumes for his character that he was a prosperous businessman long before he became internationally famous.

He rose to the rank of captain while serving with the British Army during the Second World War and, after stepping away from military service, he went on to have a long and distinguished career within the advertising industry, initially with Dunlop. He later worked for a number of leading agencies and was credited with several slogans that became part of British TV's lexicon during the 1960s and 1970s: 'Trill makes budgies bounce with health', for instance, or 'Opal Fruits, made to make your mouth water'.

His commentary career evolved in parallel, albeit very much as an extracurricular activity.

He first picked up a microphone at Shelsley Walsh in 1948 and later that year took his mother's Morris Minor to Silverstone to watch the RAC International Grand Prix at the circuit's inaugural meeting. Little did he realise that, seven months hence, he'd be back at the venue, this time sitting in the primitive commentary box at Stowe. "I saw John Bolster have an

absolutely enormous accident in his ERA," he recalled, "and felt certain he was probably dead. I wasn't quite sure what to say, so just blurted out something like, 'And Bolster has gone off.'" Bolster recovered and later became technical editor of *Autosport*.

He obtained his first regular commentary job during the 1950s, working alongside his father to provide radio reports at the Isle of Man TT and assuming a lead role after the latter's death in 1962. Wider recognition was forthcoming over the next two decades, when he covered rallycross and motorcycle scrambling for TV sports shows on Saturday afternoons. By day, though, he remained an advertising executive - as he would until he was almost 60.

It was only in 1978 that the BBC began to show recorded highlights from every grand prix and Walker was chosen as lead commentator, a role he maintained when full live race coverage came on stream during the early 1980s. He remained in situ until late 2001, switching between BBC and ITV as the contract changed hands. And long after his 'retirement', he continued doing documentary work for BBC and Channel 4 into the late 2010s. At the Nürburgring in 2007, aged 83, he stood in as lead commentator for BBC Radio 5 Live during the Grand Prix of Europe. Yes, there were occasional gaffes throughout his career, but they made up a tiny percentage of his output. And to many listeners or viewers, they became an endearing trait. As he often put it, "I don't make mistakes. I make prophecies that immediately turn out to be wrong."

Along the way, he forged strong partnerships with several former racers, including James Hunt, Jonathan Palmer and Martin Brundle. Walker was happy to admit that he hadn't initially wanted to share the booth with Hunt, but despite their contrasting personalities the chemistry worked - even if he did once come close to punching the 1976

world champion, who had just snatched their shared microphone from his grasp. A stern glance from producer Mark Wilkin helped restore equilibrium.

Walker's popularity blossomed thanks to his effervescent manner and warm personality. It didn't much matter whether you were a multiple champion, an aspiring racer, a cub reporter or an autograph hunter, he saw no distinctions and would always make time.

I was fortunate to collaborate with him on various projects, including *Murray Walker's Grand Prix Year*, an F1 annual I edited for several years. On a number of occasions during this period I'd come home to hear my wife chatting happily on the phone and she'd give me a wave before continuing her conversation. Ten minutes later she'd bring me the phone, "It's actually for you, it's Murray..." He had a way of making everybody feel like a friend.

I also had the privilege of lap-charting for him during the Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch in the 1980s. As well as scribbling notes that might usefully be weaved into his commentary, I had to duck frequently to avoid Murray's arms as he jumped around the box, pointing out things to an audience that couldn't see him. But that was the norm, a man totally absorbed in the task at hand and trying to make the racing sound

exciting because *he* found it exciting.

And whenever you phoned to pick his brains about bygone races he'd seen firsthand, just as you started to wind down the conversation he'd pick it up again and turn the tables, throwing in questions about a feature he'd read in this magazine or elsewhere, asking what you thought about Team X signing Driver Y, or perhaps the latest F1 regulations. His enthusiasm was infectious.

I'm sad that I'll no longer be able to make such calls, but above all this should be a time to celebrate a life lived to the full - and then some. Thank you, Murray.

"Murray had a way of making everyone feel like a friend"

GP de Monaco Historique back on the calendar

AFTER AN ABSENCE OF THREE YEARS, the 12th edition of the Grand Prix de Monaco Historique will return this April, boasting a bumper entry list and a special dedication to the history of Scuderia Ferrari.

The biennial event last ran in 2018, and had been scheduled to return for 2020, but plans were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic leading event organiser, the Automobile Club de Monaco, to delay until April 23-25, 2021.

The date shuffle could have played havoc with the event's headline historic Formula 1 Grand Prix, which had been planned to celebrate the 70th anniversary of F1 in 2020. However, the event will now shift the focus to celebrating the 70th anniversary since Ferrari's first grand prix victory, which came at the 1951 British GP when José Froilán González triumphed at Silverstone aboard his 4.5-litre V12 375.

Split across seven categories and seven races around the full harbour grand prix track, the Grand Prix Historique has

attracted a total of 170 entries. Fields will be divided into races for pre-war cars/voitures (Class A), front-engined cars from 1946-1960 (B), front-engined sports racing cars 1952-1957 (C), 1500cc Formula 1 cars from 1961-1965 (D), cars up to 3 litres 1966-1972 (E), GP cars from 1973-76 (F) and cars from 1977 to the age limit of 1980 (G).

There are a number of star attractions throughout the entry aimed at celebrating the Ferrari legacy (*see box, right*), as well as a host of big-name drivers including ex-Formula 1 drivers Pastor Maldonado (1937 Maserati 4CM), Alex Caffi (1969 Ferrari 312), Jean Alesi (1974 Ferrari 312B3) and René Arnoux (312B3).

Historic racing regulars such as Gregor Fisker (1955 HWM-Jaguar and 1975 Shadow DN5), Andy Middlehurst (1962 Lotus 25), Roald Goethe (1970 McLaren M14A and 1974 Tyrrell 007), Stuart Hall (1971 McLaren M19A and 1973 McLaren M23) and Michael Lyons (1971 Surtees TS9, 1976 McLaren M26 and 1977 Hesketh 308E) will also be in action over the weekend.

THE FAMOUS SIX

The Monaco Historique will feature a number of models dedicated to honouring 70 years of Formula 1 success for Ferrari. Here is the list...



1934 ALFA ROMEO TIPO B (P3)

The type of car Enzo used for racing between 1933-37, before founding Ferrari in 1947.



1960 DINO 246

The final front-engined car to win a World Championship grand prix, in the hands of Phil Hill at Monza.



1953 250 MILLE MIGLIA

Testimony to the single year when sports cars replaced single-seaters for the Monaco GP in 1952.



1964 FERRARI 1512

The model used by both Phil Hill in 1961 and John Surtees in 1964 to win the World Championship.



FOUR FERRARI TYPE 312s

From the first era of 3-litre grand prix cars as raced by Surtees, Bandini and Scarfiotti.



TWO FERRARI 312 B3s

To be driven by former works drivers Alesi and Arnoux, both GP winners with the marque.

Is Ducati using ground effect for more grip in MotoGP?

DUCATI UNVEILED ITS LATEST AERO AT the Qatar tests last month and eagle-eyed observers quickly spotted an unusual design feature that could signal a new front in the battle for two-wheeled supremacy. The new aero features a duct on either side of the lower fairing, taking air that's travelled either side of the front wheel, turning it almost



The 'downwash duct' creates downforce at high lean angles

90 degrees and ejecting it downward. It was featured on the bikes of test rider Michele Pirro and 2021 factory riders Jack Miller and Pecco Bagnaia.

"This is the first time we've seen fairing aero elements so low down and close to the track," said Ali Rowland-Rouse, a motorcycle racer and F1 aerodynamicist. "It's a downwash duct and at high lean angles it's very close to the track, so it produces downforce."

If true and if it appears at the first race, the arrival of downforce in the sport will divide opinion among fans who point to the massive sums spent in F1 and the resulting problems it has caused as a reason not to pursue it. It will also split opinion among rival teams who want to develop technology relevant to street bikes, which does not include extreme aero.

DPI, DUCATI, GETTY IMAGES, GRAND PRIX PHOTO



McLaren M14 and a crowd (!) at the 2016 Monaco Historique. Above: Maserati A6GCM rolls back the years



Tributes for pioneering racer

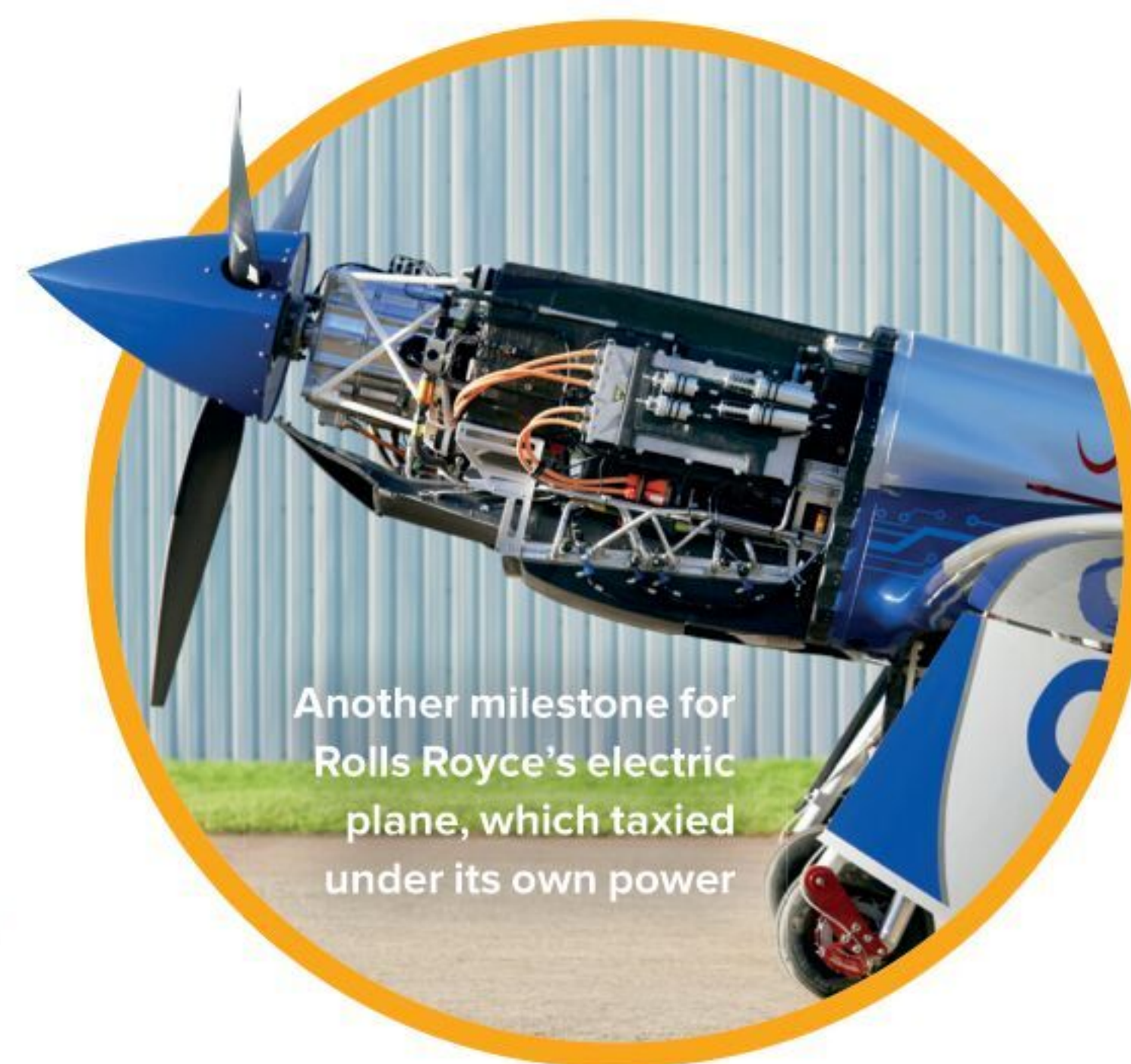
BOTH THE SPORTING AND ENTERTAINMENT worlds have paid tribute to Queen of the Nürburgring Sabine Schmitz, who died age 51 in March after a long battle with cancer.

Schmitz was a prominent figure in racing and TV thanks to her star performances at the 'Ring, and her appearances on German and British motoring shows. She became the first and only female driver to win the Nürburgring 24 Hours when she was part of the Scheid Motorsport crew that celebrated back-to-back victories with its BMW E36 M3 in 1996 and '97.

Schmitz gained local fame through being the BMW Ring Taxi driver, offering hot laps to corporate guests and customers alike. Her flamboyant driving style and natural charisma led to her securing roles with German TV shows, before she first appeared on UK screens in an episode of *Jeremy Clarkson: Meets the Neighbours* in 2002. That led to an expanded role with *Top Gear*. In 2016 she became a full-time host for series 23, and is believed to have clocked up over 20,000 laps of the Nordschleife across her career. She revealed that she had been battling a persistent form of cancer since 2017. She died on March 16, 2021.

Current *Top Gear* presenter Chris Harris described Schmitz as a "wonderful, powerful, hilarious person". Clarkson added: "Such a sunny person, so full of beans."

Rolls Royce's electric plane ups the pace towards the record books



WE DON'T QUITE HAVE LIFT OFF, but we do have taxiing. One of the most advanced eco-planes in the world hit the runway last month ahead of its first test flight this spring and a planned attempt at setting a world speed record for an electric aircraft.

The Spirit of Innovation manoeuvred along the runway under its own power for the first time, signalling a crucial step forward for the project, which has been underway since 2019. Using a bank of 6000 cells, the battery feeds energy to a 500hp electric powertrain allowing the plane to

reach a speed of 300mph and a range of 200 miles. The project is being led by Rolls Royce as part of the Accelerating the Electrification of Flight (ACCEL) programme. It is working with Electroflight, a Gloucestershire-based start-up firm which specialises in electric powertrains. The project is part funded by the Department of Business.

"There are unique challenges to overcome," says Matheu Parr, ACCEL project manager. "The battery will need to be powerful enough to beat performance records, carry enough energy to complete those courses and light enough to fly."

Aviation, just like the car world, is increasingly looking towards electrification as a way of reducing its carbon emissions. Last month Faradair, a UK business operating from Duxford airfield, announced it was developing a revolutionary 18-seat bioelectric hybrid plane. The plane will use electric motors to power take-off and landing, the part of any flight with the highest noise and carbon emissions. Once cruising at a speed of about 230mph the plane will switch to its turbogenerator, powered by biofuel, which will also recharge the batteries with assistance from solar panels.

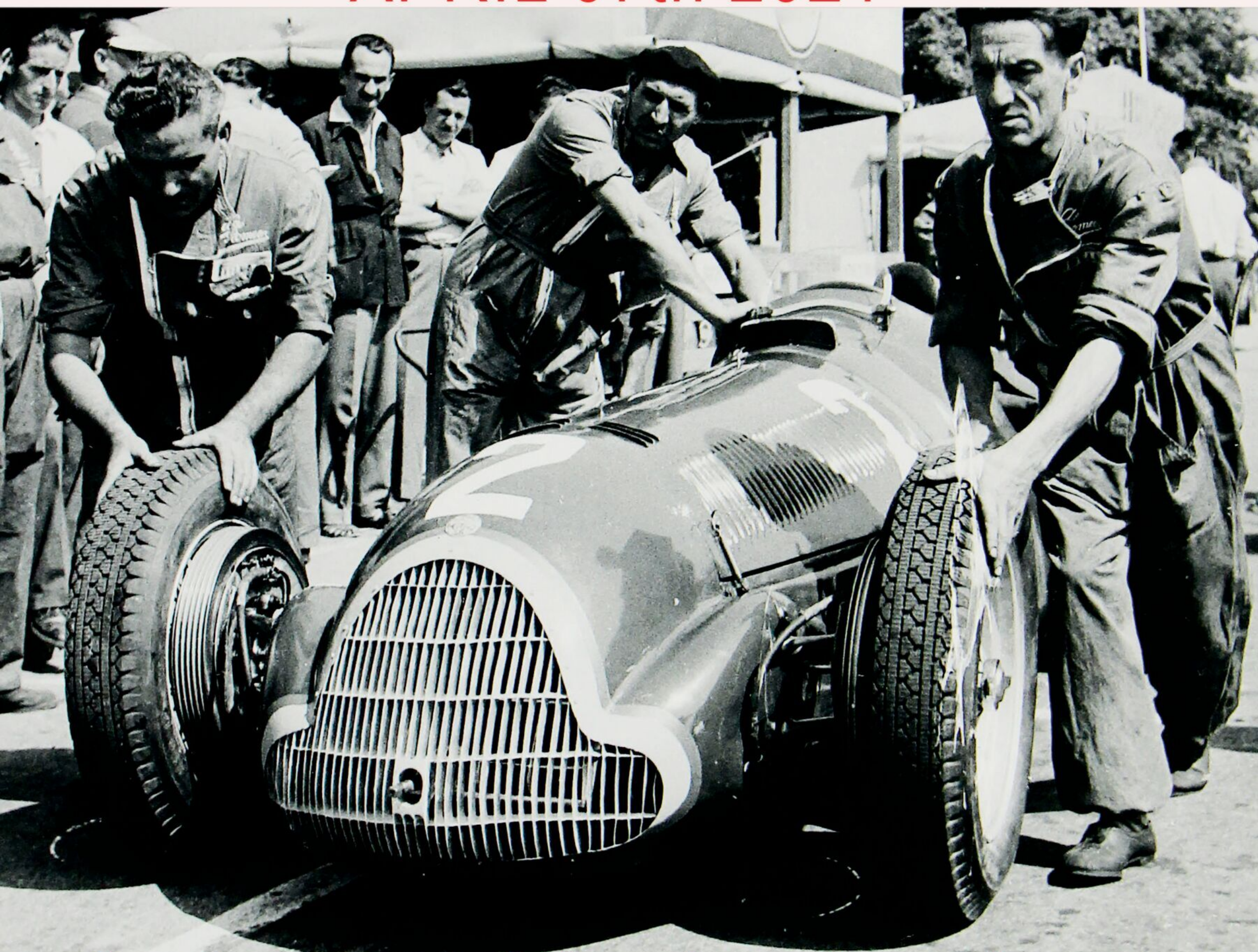


The technology being developed could be used to power future zero-emission air taxis





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It is claimed that performance levels either met or exceeded McLaren's expectations

McLaren unveils track-only 720S GT3X

IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PUSHING RACING boundaries, McLaren has expanded its motor sport range with the 720S GT3X, which promises to break free of the restrictions of modern sporting categories.

Based on the current 720S GT3, the track-only GT3X offers increased levels of power and performance by not being homologated to any current racing category.

That does bring about the downside that it can't race in much due to its unrestricted nature, but nobody seemed to care when Porsche did a similar thing with its 919 Hybrid LMP1 in order to chase unofficial lap records, or for any of Ferrari's XX track-bred models.

Without GT3 restrictors, the GT3X will be capable of producing up to 710bhp from its 4-litre twin-turbocharged V8, with an extra 30bhp through a push-to-pass system.

Kerb weight is 1210kg and the car's aerodynamics have been refined. Bodywork is finished in MSO Carbon Black paint with orange pinstriping reminiscent of McLaren's 1960s Formula 1 cars. As part of the package, factory technicians will be on-hand to support GT3X owners whenever the car runs.

McLaren Customer Racing director Ian Morgan said: "Due to GT3 balance of performance requirements the 720S GT3 has to run with considerably less power than the road-going 720S variants. The brief for this project was to unleash the full potential of the GT3 car using massive power increases to fully exploit the aerodynamic and chassis dynamics of the car. Additionally, the car is capable of carrying passengers thanks to a redesign of the rollcage."

McLaren hasn't yet revealed the price.



An optional passenger seat means it is possible to frighten the life out of a friend or loved one



Kwik Kiwis open Donington showroom

THE NEW ZEALAND COMPANY BEHIND the car which was described by *Motor Sport* as the closest thing most people will ever get to driving an F1 machine has opened its first showroom in the UK. Rodin's main attraction at the new premises will be the FZED single-seater - one of the fastest

open-wheel race cars in the world, which the company stresses can run as the ultimate track-day weapon without requiring the assistance of a full race team.

Weighing just 589kg, the FZED is powered by a 3.8-litre Cosworth GPV8 engine that produces 675bhp at 9600rpm and 361lb ft of torque at 7600rpm. "While we are a New Zealand-based company, our plan has always been to establish a UK base," says David Dicker, founder of Rodin Cars. "We have big plans for the new space, with a desire to showcase not just our supercars, but also the state-of-the-art technology and engineering that is going into their manufacturing."

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MARK HUGHES

"The regulations might have combined to make this a vintage season"

UNTIL MAX VERSTAPPEN blitzed the pre-season testing in his Red Bull-Honda, there was no real reason to suppose the competitive hierarchy of this season was going to differ significantly from the recent past: with Mercedes firmly on top.

It may ultimately turn out that way again, of course; it's a long season. But there is at least some hope of a close contest. Honda, Red Bull and the tweaked floor regulations of '21 have possibly combined in a way that just might make this a vintage season.

Honda's racing personnel were deeply saddened at the parent company decision to withdraw from F1 at the end of this year and have responded with a very aggressive strategy for their final year. What was set to be the power unit for the new formula (initially set for this year, since postponed to next year) has been reinstated as the 2021 engine, having originally been postponed along with the regulations. Subsequently, the Honda pull-out would have meant the exciting new power unit would not have seen the light of day. This was unbearable for Yasuaki Asaki, the director of Honda R&D in Sakura, who had overseen the development of the radical new engine. So he went to see the boss. "When it was announced that we would withdraw in 2021 around autumn, I asked President Hachigo to admit that it would not be acceptable to finish without producing results, and he allowed us to resume development. I was able to make it in time."

The RA621 is no mere update of the same basic unit used since 2017, but virtually all-new - and absolutely tiny, smaller than the infamous 'size zero' of 2015. Smaller, more powerful and representing a lot of new thinking. Pre-season, Honda's F1 technical director Toyoharu Tanabe

was claiming it exceeds the power of last year's Mercedes, which was by some margin the most powerful in the field. How it compares to this year's Merc we'll get to see in the coming races.

It was notable in the last couple of years that the Honda ran out of electrical deployment earlier than the Mercedes - at least on those tracks where there was insufficient braking to recover all the energy that might be demanded. In getting to the root of this, it seems that Honda has re-assessed the priorities between generating engine power and recovering energy from the exhaust via the ERS-H.

"The power unit in modern F1 is a complex system that uses the energy from the exhaust gas to generate electricity," explained Asaki. "So it is not enough to just aim at increasing the efficiency and power of the engine... The law of conservation of energy says that if you increase the horsepower of the crank, the energy of the exhaust will decrease. That's what

we're trying to address with the new framework, so we can increase both.

"MGU-H is a system that regenerates energy from exhaust gas. The amount of power of MGU-H is unlimited. For this reason, that is the heart of the game. The boost pressure is raised by the motor, and when the waste gate opens, the

exhaust pressure drops and power comes out. It is called e-boost, but the usage is to aim for control that maximises competitiveness with complicated electrical management."

The extension of that line of reasoning seems to have liberated the design of the engine's cylinder head. If greater exhaust back pressure has been deemed acceptable - because the recovery systems can deliver more lap time from it by converting it to stored electricity - then a completely different combustion chamber with a greater valve angle can be enabled. This in turn can allow the camshafts

to be lower. Those camshafts have also been reduced in diameter.

"The centre of gravity is lowered and the freedom of air flow over the camshaft is increased," says Asaki. Different material for the block has also allowed the gap between the cylinders to be smaller, thereby making the engine yet more compact.

This downsizing has been gratefully accepted by Red Bull and used to enhance the aerodynamics of the RB16B. The team was already on a good productive path with the car's aero by the end of last season (it started from pole in Abu Dhabi and was within hundredths in the preceding Sakhir race) and it just may be that the reduced floor area demanded by the '21 regulations has impacted less upon the shorter, higher-rake Red Bull than the longer, lower-rake Mercedes. The regulation diagonal line running from the front of the outer floor to the back robs the Mercedes of more floor area. The aero advantage of the swept back rear suspension of last year's Mercedes has been nullified by Red Bull accomplishing something similar even within the constraints of the development tokens. Certainly the RB16B looks a sweeter, more benign drive than its quick but demanding predecessor.

But still, this is Mercedes. Regardless of the improvements of Red Bull and Honda, Merc will have made plenty of its own. An epic contest could yet be in store. Asaki is sad but excited about Honda's prospects in its last season as an official participant. "We'll have to wait and see what other companies can do... I have expectations and concerns about what will happen but I have a great feeling that I've done what I can, so I'd like to manage to fight this year and instil confidence in the feelings of engineers at the end of the F1 activities."

Since he began covering grand prix racing in 2000, Mark Hughes has forged a reputation as the finest Formula 1 analyst of his generation. Follow Mark on Twitter @SportmphMark

"Asaki is sad but excited about Honda's prospects in its last season as participant"



MAT OXLEY

"Rossi has always found the media's obsession with milestones tiresome"

VALENTINO ROSSI COMMENCED his 26th grand prix season and his 22nd in the premier MotoGP class on March 28, thereby extending his record as the sport's longest-serving rider. Rossi's career also betters those of Formula 1's most enduring drivers, Kimi Räikkönen and Rubens Barrichello. This is especially impressive because each time the seven-time MotoGP champion ventures out of the pitlane he's protected not by an almost indestructible carbon-fibre safety cell but by a suit of kangaroo leather.

Rossi's career statistics are breathtaking: 413 grand prix starts (before this season's opening race), 115 victories and 235 podiums across the 125cc, 250cc and MotoGP classes. Those top-three results include 199 in MotoGP. Following his 199th, achieved at Jerez last July, he was frequently asked for his thoughts about the possibility of a 200th MotoGP podium.

The Italian has always found the media's obsession with milestones tiresome because usually they're not something that motivate him. "I'm not here for the 200th podium," he opined on the eve of August's Czech GP. "I'm here because I like to race motorcycles."

That is all you need to know if you ever wonder what keeps him going after so many broken bones, bruises and concussions.

The 2021 season is significant because for the first time in 20 years Rossi isn't part of an official manufacturer team. After 15 seasons with Yamaha the company relegated him to the independent Petronas Sepang Racing Team, where he rides a factory-spec YZR-M1, but without an army of Japanese engineers in his garage.

In theory this seems a negative. Most importantly in terms of electronics, because factory riders have many more electronics technicians working through their data, trying to make a difference. But we will have to wait and see if this really is a negative.

Surely Rossi can't do any worse than last season, his poorest in grand prix racing, during which he took home an average of 4.7 points from each race, of a possible 25. Even if we discount the two races he missed when he was sick with Covid he only scored 5.5 per race, considerably worse than his rookie grand prix season in 1996, when he averaged 7.4 points aboard his 45bhp Aprilia 125.

If you believe in history repeating then his move to a non-factory team is rich in good omens. The last time Rossi rode for an independent squad - in 2001 - he won his first MotoGP title (this was the last time that the series was simply called the 500cc World Championship). And in 1997 he won his first world title, in the 125cc category, while riding for an independent outfit.

On both of those occasions the team structures were basically the same as his current set-up: an indie team equipped with factory bikes, furnished with some factory support and led by people who knew what they were doing and were able to go about their business free of the kind of politics that can encumber official manufacturer teams.

In 1997 his Aprilia team was a tiny affair, run by the urbane, cigar-chomping Giampiero Sacchi, who later led Jorge Lorenzo and Marco Simoncelli to world titles in the smaller classes. In 2001 his Honda team was led by Jeremy Burgess, the straight-talking Australian who had earlier guided Mick Doohan to five straight 500cc World Championships.

This year Rossi once again has an experienced paddock warrior looking after his interests. Dutchman Wilco Zeelenberg is a former 250cc grand prix winner who has a perfect understanding of what it takes to succeed at the highest level. Zeelenberg's management style is avuncular yet robust and

probably more effective than that employed by Yamaha's factory team.

Rossi is fully aware of the fact that he's no longer a title favourite and he's happy with that. The 42-year-old is driven by his love of the game, the desire to train, the enthusiasm for working with his crew and the hope that every now and again he will finish the weekend on the podium.

"Races where I finish a long way behind are bad for everyone in my garage - we look at each other and we don't have the words," he said after his most recent podium last summer. "It's like, maybe it's time to stay at home. Like today is better! This is a hard game!"

Top-three results are certainly within Rossi's grasp, especially if Yamaha finds its way out of the doldrums. The factory that won seven riders MotoGP titles between 2004, when Rossi joined Yamaha, and 2015, when

Lorenzo won his third crown with the marque, hasn't won a single title since, because its engineers have struggled to adapt the M1 to Michelin's spec tyres, introduced in 2016. Surely Yamaha must crack the Michelin code soon. But there's no guarantee of that.

Wins aren't out of reach, at least when circumstances work in his favour. Rossi won his last

MotoGP race at Assen in 2017, when a rain shower dampened the track, convincing the title contenders that this was a day to take home some points rather than risk everything in pursuit of maximum points. Rossi had no such qualms to take his 89th premier-class victory, 0.063secs ahead of Danilo Petrucci.

Of one thing there is no doubt - he still has the fight in him.

"Wins aren't out of reach, at least when events work in his favour"

Mat Oxley has covered motorcycle racing for many years - and also has the distinction of being an Isle of Man TT winner
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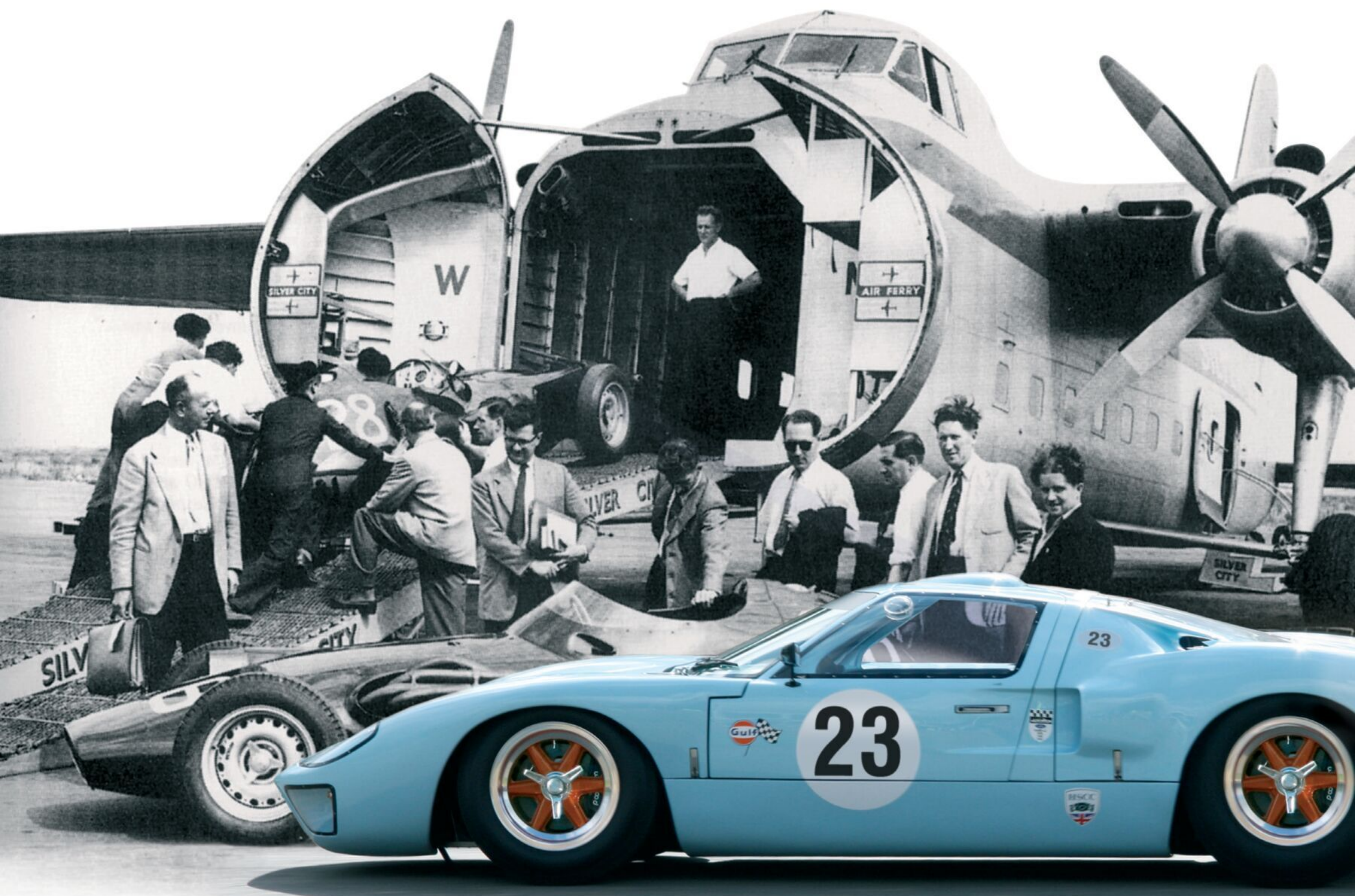
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DOUG NYE

"It's always convenient to consider bygone history in 10-year chunks"

IT'S A TRUISM THAT THE TOUGHER times become, the more many of us take refuge in the comfort of the past. As one who can hardly bear to watch such sporting contests as Six Nations rugby or an England test match, or indeed the America's Cup sailing live - because I don't handle tension too well - yet who will avidly devour the replay once I know the (too often awful) outcome, I have much sympathy with this mindset.

It's always convenient to consider bygone history in 10-year chunks. This year the motor racing world will be looking back in particular to 1961 - the year of the then brand-new 1½-litre Formula 1, so dominated by the 'Sharknose' Ferraris - but against that background it's quite interesting to leap forward in 10-year slices. A decade after the 'Sharknose' and Phil Hill's win for them in the Drivers' World Championship, Ferrari launched into 1971 riding high on the success of its gorgeous 3-litre flat-12 312B cars during the second half of the 1970 season. Then it had won four of the last five Championship-qualifying rounds, the first three of those consecutively - the Austrian, Italian and Canadian GPs. Emerson Fittipaldi struck back by scoring his breakthrough GP victory for Lotus at Watkins Glen, but then Jacky Ickx renewed the Italian team's winning streak with a great performance in Mexico.

Into the 1971 season Ferrari then seemed to be in tremendous shape. After Chris Amon's long-awaited win for Matra in the Ferrari-free non-Championship Argentine GP, the Italian steamroller resumed what had become normal service at Kyalami with Mario Andretti driving the winning 312B. Clay Regazzoni then followed up with another win for Ferrari in the Race of Champions at Brands Hatch, and Mario triumphed again in the Questor GP at Ontario Motor Speedway, California. But the wheels then fell off the Italian campaign.

Jackie Stewart, Derek Gardner's Tyrrell and the latest Cosworth-Ford DFV V8 development engines progressively de-bagged Ferrari through the remainder of that season. The updated Ferrari 312B2/Firestone low-profile tyre combination produced more destructive vibration than extended grip. If only the second half of 1970 and the first half of '71 had formed one single World Championship campaign then Ferrari would surely have walked away with the titles. As it was, its success proved out of phase for two consecutive seasons, and failure resulted.

Spool forward another 10 years, to 1981. Huge change. Ferrari emerged from a terrible 2020-like season of 1980, but one for which they had in effect both budgeted, and braced themselves. Mr Ferrari had taken the long-range strategic decision to follow Renault Sport's lead and invest heavily in development of a 1.5-litre turbocharged V6 engine. Pending its introduction the team updated its Championship-winning 312T4 design of 1979 and sent reigning Champion driver Jody Scheckter and the irrepressible Gilles Villeneuve back into battle with the recycled, uncompetitive, pseudo ground-effect 312T5. They struggled all year. While Villeneuve kept motivated, the unimpressive Scheckter surrendered both his racing career, and much respect...

Through 1981 the brand-new Ferrari 126C series turbo cars struggled towards reliability. Villeneuve drove around the design's handling deficiencies to exploit its explosive straightline capabilities to the full. His Monaco and Spanish Grands Prix wins were spectacular, taking advantage of rivals' failings in Monte Carlo but then indomitably blocking off his rivals all around the tight

Jarama circuit to score victory with just 1.24secs covering the top five finishers. It proved the Canadian's last win.

By 1991 Mr Ferrari had long since died, a new cabal was in command and the 10-year slice saw the 3.5-litre V12 Ferrari 642/643s consistently outclassed by the dominant McLaren-Honda MP4/6s. Team drivers Alain Prost and Gerhard Berger salvaged only three second places each, using cars well short of design maturity.

Into century 21 - 2001 - Ferrari had taken Formula 1 by the throat. Jean Todt erected the political umbrella under which technical director Ross Brawn, chassis designers Rory Byrne, Aldo Costa and Nikolas Tombazis, and engine head Paolo Martinelli produced their F2001 cars. Michael Schumacher won nine GPs to secure his fourth World title, his second consecutively for Ferrari, which secured a hat-trick of Constructors' Championships 1999-2000-2001 - and of course another sequence of three more would follow.

So our last slice - 2011 - with the forgettably entitled 2.4-litre V8 Ferrari 150° Italia cars for Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa. Five second places for the Spaniard and six fifth places for the luckless Brazilian did little to revive Ferrari fortunes. And here now - at the

outset of the 2021 series, Ferrari's finest have a ghastly year thankfully receding in their rear-view mirror. Sixty years after its success of '61, 50 years after their disappointments of '71, 40 years after the rousing turbocharged revival of '81 - all Ferrari fans have their fingers crossed this time. Delight, or dismay - we shall see.

"Ferrari's finest have a ghastly year receding in their rear-view mirror"

Doug Nye is the UK's leading motor racing historian and has been writing authoritatively about the sport since the 1960s



ANDREW FRANKEL

“Rule makers have an unenviable record of being outwitted by engineers”

WHY DOES SPORTS CAR racing have to be so cyclical in nature? When I entered this business, Group C was at its height with Porsches, Jaguars, Mercedes, Astons, Mazdas and many others all duking it out in a riotous assembly of rumbles, growls, howls, screams and shrieks. But then it got really expensive and everyone ran away, leaving a few thinly disguised formula racing cars. Group C died, but from its ashes rose the BPR and with it McLaren F1s, Porsche 911s, Ferrari F40s, Dodge Vipers and, briefly, all was well with the world.

But then once more money got in the way. Manufacturers started passing off prototypes as production cars, and sports car racing was heading for the doldrums until a load of factory teams turned up to take us to a point at Le Mans in 1999 where there were works squads from Audi, BMW, Nissan, Mercedes-Benz, Panoz, and Toyota. And then just as things looked like they couldn't get any better, they got a lot worse. We entered the era of Audi out-thinking and outspending the opposition, resulting in a run of 13 Le Mans victories in 15 seasons. Even then, remember that while one of its two losses in France was fair and square to Peugeot, in 2003 Audi didn't send works cars to Le Mans.

And for the most part, particularly when inaudible diesels entered the fray, it got dull. Then the temptation of being able to showcase its hybrid technology meant that Porsche piled in, so did Toyota and with Audi not prepared to relinquish its territory, briefly sports car racing was as good as it had ever been. We had cars with four, six and eight cylinders, natural and forced aspiration, four- and two-wheel drive, hybrids storing energy, and all lapping in near identical times. The middle of the last decade was a golden era, but a short one. Porsche and Audi buggered off to pursue ambitions in Formula E leaving sports car racing once more in a very parlous state.

Two years from now there will be cars from Porsche, Audi, Toyota, Peugeot, Honda and Ferrari (at least) all vying for outright victory in what looks like the most exciting time for sports car racing since at least the BPR in the mid 1990s, and perhaps since Porsche and Ferrari last knocked lumps out of each other over 24 hours in France in the early 1970s.

But how long is it going to last? Someone will find a way to build a car that's faster than all the others and a graphene-thin film away from illegality. The others will be faced with either spending millions catching up, by which stage the goalposts will have moved, or finding another sandpit in which to play.

Who's to blame? It can only be the rule makers who have an unenviable record of being outwitted by race cars engineers ever since their rulebook came into being. So why not just get rid of the rules, because you can't break something that doesn't exist? The idea of a return to the simplicity of Formula Libre has an appeal, but it's not practical. The reasons you need rules today are not just to ensure a level playing field (which they never do) but to stop cars going faster than is safe. So having no rules is never going to work.

So what to do? You can balance performance in the usual way but that addresses merely the symptoms of an inadequate rulebook and creates other problems, such as teams deliberately under-performing in the previous race or qualifying to gain a favourable BoP for the actual race they really want to win, usually Le Mans, and we all know that happens.

It's not easy, but I'd be interested to see if strict enforcement of a presumption of illegality made a difference. Instead of being able to put anything on the car the rules don't specifically disallow, instead teams wouldn't be able to put anything on the car unless it was specifically allowed. Maybe that's what happens already

but unless someone finds a way of breaking the boom-and-bust cycle of sports car racing, two things are clear: in a few years sports car is going to be wonderful; after that, we're going to be having this conversation again.

PORSCHE'S SUGGESTION THAT IT WOULD TAKE a serious look at involvement in F1 if the sport adopted synthetic fuels seems to be more than a toe in the water. F1 last year announced it was looking to have its cars powered by 'sustainable' fuels by 2026, and unless it means fuel cells or battery powered cars - and it doesn't - petrol produced in a lab seems the only way forward. So Porsche's proviso appears to have been met, and in a timescale that coincides with the vast Porsche-Siemens synthetic fuel plant being built in Chile to come fully on stream. Whether it will maintain its presence in Formula E and LMdH is not known. As its sports car programme will have barely started by then, if it were to give up something, it would seem logical for it to follow Audi and BMW out of Formula E.

But the bigger question is whether Formula 1 can claim any form of environmental credibility when the emissions of the race cars are as nothing compared to those of the aircraft that fly the circus around the world. That's where synthetic fuels are exciting:

the car industry has more than one clean and credible alternative to the internal combustion engine, but the airline industry none. If F1's move to sustainable fuels is to be more than a gesture, it needs to use them not only to power the race cars that are its public face, but the fleet of cargo aircraft that are the real source of its significant emissions.

“Emissions of race cars are nothing compared to those of aircraft”

A former editor of *Motor Sport*, Andrew splits his time between testing the latest road cars and racing (mostly) historic machinery
Follow Andrew on Twitter @Andrew_Frankel



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Prestigious Competition?

Supercar swift, safe and tech-packed, the fattened-up BMW M3 will have its admirers, but **Andrew Frankel** isn't one of them

SLIDING BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A new BMW M3 is always a moment to savour. There's something about that letter and number that still captivates, even after all this time and series of cars, some markedly better than others. An M3, any M3, is the heart of BMW's high-performance division and should always be a special thing.

Do not be fooled by 'Competition' tacked onto the end of this one's name into thinking it's some kind of derivative of an extant model. As you can see from its toothsome smile, this is a new M3, and while Competition does indeed mean it's a fast model, the standard M3 is not coming to the UK. What is coming this summer is the first ever four-wheel-drive M3 and then, at the end of next year, the first ever M3 Touring. The mechanically identical two-door M4 Competition is also on sale now.

Everything has changed about this car compared to 2016's M3 Competition. Yes it has a twin-turbo 3-litre straight-six engine, but it's

not carried over and has a different cubic capacity. What it does have is 503bhp compared to the 444bhp of its predecessor, a substantial gain in power, but only enough to offset a scarcely less substantial 135kg gain, which is why BMW claims the new car is a scant tenth of a second swifter to 62mph.

Everything else has gone up too: length, wheelbase, width and height, but nothing quite so much as the price: five years ago the last M3 Competition went on sale for £59,595. Today you'll part with £73,700 before extras.

But for all that it has gained, the M3 has lost something too: the option of a manual gearbox. BMW makes one for the car but only offers it on non-Comp models so it's not coming here, largely because BMW sold hardly any manual versions of the previous car. The truth is the only people who want manual M3s tend to be rabid enthusiasts who buy them second-hand, which is not much use to BMW now. What may be less easy to swallow is the replacement of its double clutch gearbox

with a conventional automatic transmission. And we'll be seeing about that shortly.

For now, join me in a cockpit that looks luxurious and technologically state-of-the-art. There are so many ways it can be configured, so many toys and displays to play with, that I was still finding new avenues to amuse myself when my drive was nearly over. And it's not all show: scroll through the maps for the engine, the electronic dampers and gearbox and you can feel every change you make.

Even if you just set everything to 'comfort', the M3 is firm and no-nonsense. Structurally it feels solid as granite and offers that instant reassurance we crave from properly fast cars - that it's not going to do anything without prior instruction from you. Which is very good.

As is the new engine. It's obviously bursting with power but what I like is how the additional urge has been extracted from the same capacity without dulling the throttle response or introducing any additional off boost lethargy. It does perhaps feel slightly more obviously turbocharged than its predecessor but not intrusively so, and I'd say its voice is actually slightly more cultured than that of its quite aggressive sounding parent, and I have no problem with that either.



More power and less intrusive on the ears than its 2016 predecessor



The revised style includes a frameless kidney grille with contoured bonnet

“It’s simple enough to hoof around, but like all heavy cars it needs space”

Even so, at times I struggled to like this car. I’m sure there are some great financial reasons for having the same kind of gearbox you’d find in a 7 Series limo, but zero credible engineering reasons of which I am aware. Even in its sharpest setting it pauses between the pull of a paddle and the delivery of a gearshift. On the way up you can find yourself on the limiter because it just keeps accelerating; on the way down you have to learn to wait.

Nor can you ever quite escape the car’s size and weight. In my head an M3 is compact, but not in reality. BMW’s chassis engineers have done what great chassis engineers always do and controlled what they can control. Which means that so long as you leave all the systems on and drive it merely quite fast, you’ll find it grippy, poised and accurate. I want more than that from an M3: I want fabulous steering and a car that’s almost as easy to direct on and over the limit as it is at other times. And it’s then that

BMW M3 COMPETITION



- **Price** £73,700
- **Engine** 3 litres, 6 cylinders, turbocharged ● **Power** 503bhp
- **Weight** 1730kg ● **Torque** 479lb ft
- **Power to weight** 291bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** Eight-speed automatic, rear-wheel drive
- **0-62mph** 3.9sec ● **Top speed** 155mph
- **Economy** 27.7mpg ● **CO₂** 234g/km
- **Verdict** A great car for today’s BMW customer, but purists will balk

the laws of physics will be silenced no longer. To be clear, it’s simple enough to hoof around, but like all heavy cars it needs space.

This new M3 is a good car, just not one that’s aimed at someone like me who values the purity of the driving experience above all else. I may wistfully look back to the days of the E30 and E46 M3s and lament the passing of their sharpened responses and gorgeous looks, but that isn’t a thought process that troubles the modern M3 buyer. What he or she wants is a car that’ll clear the fast lane quicker than anything this side of a Lamborghini Aventador, that’s dripping in tech and which feels strong, safe and bloody fast. All this it does and more.

But how much further down this road will we travel? My fag-packet calculations suggest a four-wheel drive, automatic M3 Touring that weighs close to two tonnes, and there’s nothing that will convince me that’s the right way to go for the driver or the environment. ●

Return to Defender

Barge pole set aside? Let us explain why you will love the 90

THIS SHORT-WHEELBASE 90 model is the Land Rover Defender you really should not buy. It has very little luggage space, it's hard to get in the back, it's not significantly lighter than the 110 and the cheapest versions of each are priced just £1200 apart. This is the fashion victim's Defender, the one you should avoid like a week-old pint of prawns. It is expensive, it is impractical and if that shorter wheelbase really does confer any additional off-road ability it will be in conditions so extreme that barely anyone would dare to venture there in over £50k's worth of new car.

And yet... I want it. I love the way it looks, the fact it's not just another hulking great SUV, its iconoclasm, its stance and, ashamed as I am to admit it, even the reaction it gained from the public. In future there are going to be very few cars that appeal to anything other than the most sane, rational and boring sides of our character, and even today it is hugely



What do you need luggage space for anyway? An additional roof rail costs £330... or there's the Defender 110

refreshing to drive a car that's not enslaved to cold, hard logic but seeks instead just to make you feel good.

Which it does. And like other Defenders, and the limitations of its wheelbase aside, it really works. It's quiet and comfortable, rugged and honest, fully connected but still with that authentic Land Rover feel. Despite the scream of common sense to the contrary, of all JLR product, it is the one I would have.

LAND ROVER DEFENDER 90 D250 SE

- **Price** £51,205 ● **Engine** 3 litres, 6 cylinders, turbocharged diesel
- **Power** 245bhp at 4000rpm
- **Weight** 2350kg
- **Power to weight** 104bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** Eight-speed automatic, four-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 7.7sec ● **Top speed** 117mph
- **Economy** 32.8mpg ● **CO₂** 226g/km
- **Verdict** Naughty but so, so nice

New Puma: ST or sinner?

Fiesty Ford crossover is fun to drive, but so is the Fiesta



IF THERE IS A CAR THAT BETTER illustrates all that is wrong with the 'crossover' class of car, it is this new Puma ST, despite the fact that it is head, shoulders, knees and toes better than anything in that category that can be bought for similar money.

But here is a car that is based on the Ford Fiesta ST yet priced uncomfortably close to the Focus ST. So it has the Fiesta's 1.5-litre engine with 197bhp, not the 276bhp 2.3-litre unit in the Focus. It has the Fiesta's cheap torsion beam rear axle, not the sophisticated multi-link set up of the Focus. Of the three it is the slowest and because of its height and weight it also has the least impressive handling.

There's also the question of the ride quality, which is the worst of the trio because to control its additional weight and higher centre of gravity, Ford has had to spring it more stiffly so you'll be more comfortable in the Fiesta too, let alone the Focus. Yet it is still a genuinely enjoyable car to drive. Its

three-cylinder motor is enthusiastic, and Ford's world class chassis engineers have done all they can to preserve that balletic fast Ford feel despite the compromised nature of the raw material. If you are desperate to have a crossover and care about driving, don't even consider anything else.

But if you just want a charming, fun and effective compact car, save yourself the money and buy a Fiesta instead.

FORD PUMA ST

- **Price** £28,485 ● **Engine** 1.5 litres, 3 cylinders, turbocharged
- **Power** 197bhp at 6000rpm
- **Weight** 1283kg
- **Power to weight** 154bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** Six-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 6.7sec ● **Top speed** 137mph
- **Economy** 40.9mpg ● **CO₂** 155g/km
- **Verdict** Poorer relation of the ST trio



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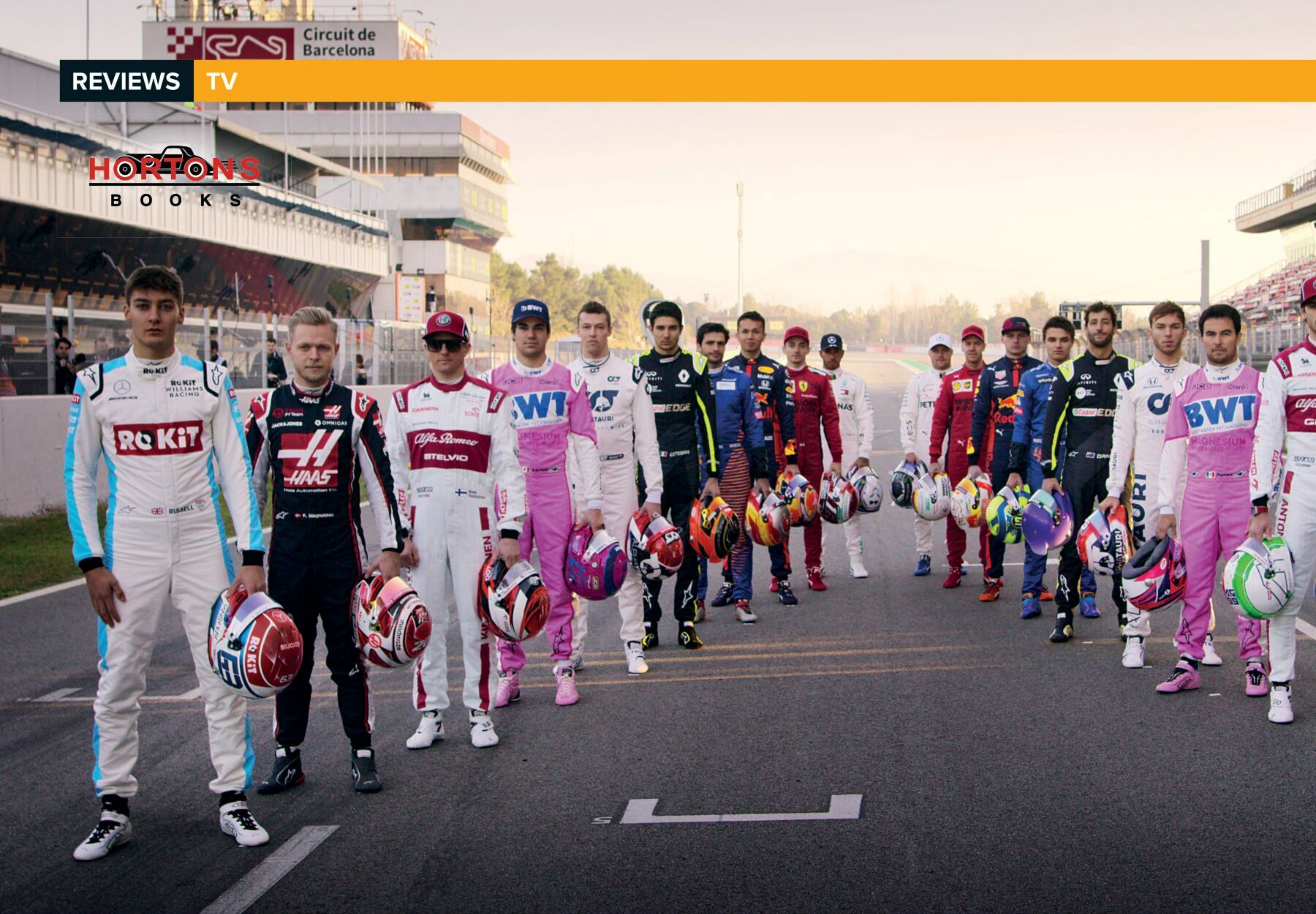
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Your armchair F1 paddock pass

The latest season of *Drive to Survive* exposes some feisty exchanges but does so with more maturity, says **James Elson**

CAMERAS AND BOOM MICS CIRCLE their prey in Styria: Daniel Ricciardo receives an icy wave from his jilted Renault team boss, Christian Horner and Helmut Marko guffaw to themselves in a corner while Günther Steiner cracks his knuckles, preparing to smash in yet another newly repaired Haas motorhome door.

The third instalment of *Drive to Survive*, the Netflix series that has introduced F1 to a whole

new audience, has arrived. With a less contrived narrative, better-integrated action shots and sound effects inflected with a little more subtlety, it also appears to have gone up a gear.

Made by Box to Box Films, the documentary is as good as some of us will get to a paddock pass, going behind the scenes to show the top level of motor sport apparently as it 'really' is.

During its short history the Netflix F1 series has found many fans, both in diehard motor sport anoraks and casual viewers, and

despite much of the fair criticism directed towards the show, it seems most just can't take their eyes off it.

And with good reason. Box to Box know a thing or two about dramatic narrative. Having produced much-lauded films on Ayrton Senna, Diego Maradona and Amy Winehouse in recent years, the directors continue to work their magic here too, but do it with a touch more delicacy than in previous *DtS* series.

If Season 2 was the high-octane equivalent of Michael Schumacher four-stopping his way to win at Magny-Cours in '04, Season 3 is a Lewis Hamilton one-stop race on the streets of Monaco: less spectacular in some ways, but just as accomplished.

That said, *Drive to Survive* Season 3 gets going faster than previous series, foregoing the usual 'how F1 works' episode to go straight into preseason testing in Barcelona BC (before Covid). A new shark has plunged into the F1 tank in the shape of 'Big Daddy' Lawrence Stroll, as Episode 1 also delves into the Racing Point 'Pink Mercedes' debacle. It's a bold move for a series aiming to ensnare casual viewers, but will please close followers of F1, as we see meetings at 'Giant Killer' HQ where they plot their better-funded rivals' downfall.

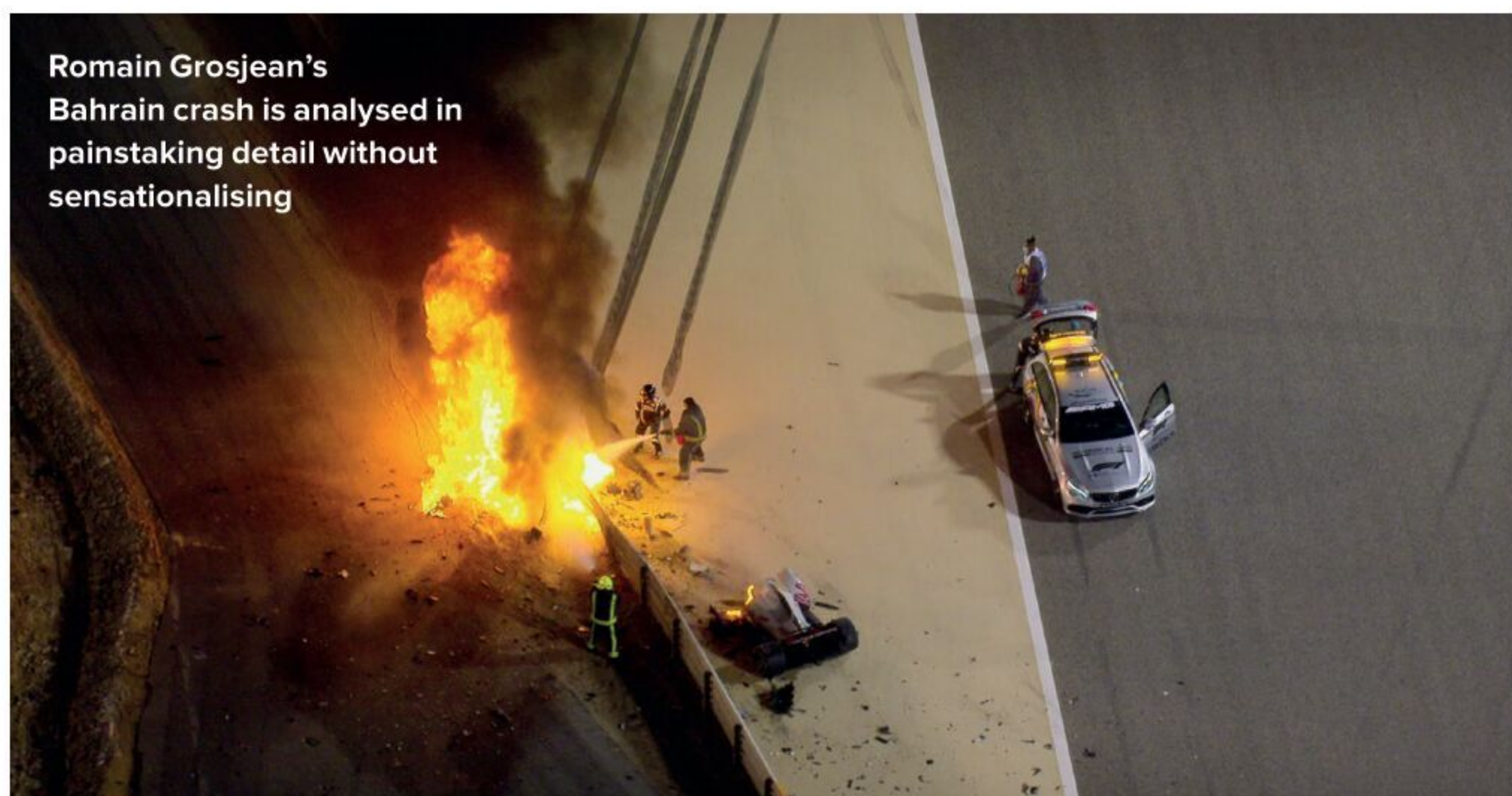


The all-star cast of *Drive to Survive* – and nobody's writing their script for them

From then on it's handbags at dawn as insults are slung back and forth throughout as a result of the Racing Point ructions, with Otmar Szafnauer saying of McLaren's team principal: "Zak's not an engineer. He's never designed a car part in his life, so what he says holds no water with me." Ooft!

Meanwhile, RP's sworn enemy – Renault team principal Cyril Abiteboul – screams, "I f***ing hate those pink cars!" as his protest lodged against them returns a limp verdict – you don't get this on *Ted's Notebook*.

Ferrari made a rather drab Netflix debut in *DtS2*, but this series' Scuderia instalment is brilliant. After his unceremonious dumping, Sebastian Vettel has decided to be the spanner in the works at every single Ferrari communications meeting, which we the viewers are deliciously privy to. The car's rubbish, their world champion driver hates them and now they're the laughing stock of the



Romain Grosjean's Bahrain crash is analysed in painstaking detail without sensationalising

whole grid to boot – this is full-on Modena meltdown in all its glory.

Mercedes' episode gives us an intriguing insight into the mind of Valtteri Bottas – and his sauna – as the Merc man and his agent take a more Finnish approach in working out how to stop getting beaten by Lewis Hamilton week after week. Come the Russian GP, Bottas shows he's not afraid to play dirty, giving Verstappen a tow in qualifying and thus affording himself a more favourable starting position.

It's fascinating to watch Toto Wolff et al split into different factions as the new villainous Valtteri foils their plan for a perfect 1-2 on the grid, in the hope of slipstreaming himself into the lead come race day. His plan nearly works, then doesn't, before Hamilton gets a penalty anyway, thus handing the race to new 'badass Bottas'. The Finn kicks back with a beer post-race, after trouncing the field and team-mate. All in a day's work.

Last year's season-long crucifixion of Pierre Gasly by Red Bull spills into this series. Witnessing his reaction to what 'Kingmaker' Horner says about him in a radio interview, as the Frenchman travels to the Italian GP – which he of course then wins – more than proves *DtS*'s worth. The timing is impeccable.

The break-up and make-up of Renault's Abiteboul and Ricciardo is where the laughs are in this series – we're left wondering whether the most irritable man in motor sport might ever get over losing his beloved 'Honey Badger'.

When the Australian announces he's leaving Renault, Abiteboul expresses just how gutted he is. They had so many plans, so many dreams! The Renault team boss admits he's an emotional man – shock horror – hence his testy

reaction to Ricciardo's departure via press release and everything that followed.

The circus act stars of previous *DtS* series, Günther Steiner and Haas, this time grittily demonstrate the difficulties of surviving in F1 instead. Steiner still manages to pop up with some great lines during this series though, and considering Haas's new 2021 title sponsor is a Russian oligarch who appears as if he could easily play any Roger Moore-era Bond villain, Haas in S4 should be extremely entertaining.

Romain Grosjean's Bahrain crash is covered in detail, addressing the emotions of all involved without at all seeming crass. Such a harrowing moment is unlikely to have been covered in a sports documentary like this before.

Some crucial moments of F1 2020 aren't covered however, such as George Russell almost winning in Sakhir, and there's minimal footage of the thrilling Turkish GP. The fact that Lewis Hamilton wins a record-equalling seventh championship is barely mentioned.

While it's a non-racing topic, the Australian GP's cancellation is covered with no controversy or contrary opinion whatsoever – Hamilton's "cash is king" comment remains the one insight. Worse is the almost complete ignoring of the Black Lives Matter movement and F1's subsequent 'We Race as One' diversity campaign. Both were huge themes of the 2020 season but you wouldn't know it from this documentary.

Instead the producers give Hamilton a five-minute slot to say his piece at the end. It appears that they simply didn't know what line to take, so decided to say nothing at all before guiltily shoving in the Hamilton afterthought.

The fact remains though that whatever your interest in F1, *Drive to Survive* makes compelling viewing. A slower burner than previous years, but one worth taking in. ●

"Renault's Cyril Abiteboul screams, 'I hate those pink cars!'"

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An SL on chains: Schock and Moll after winning the 1956 Sestriere rally

Mercedes takes wings

A new volume places the 300SL in a the milieu of the wealthy and glamorous as well as on-track success, says **Gordon Cruickshank**

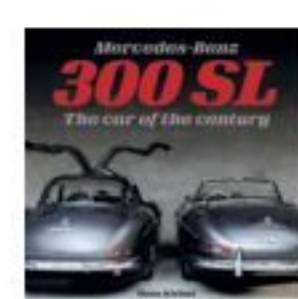
WHETHER THE 300SL is 'the car of the century' is debatable - where do Mini, VW Beetle, or Model T stand? - but it does have a very special place. Clever engineering, terrific performance, unmistakable looks and its then-unique gullwing doors mean everybody knows what it is, and the fact that variants of the engine also powered sports cars and grand prix cars to victory marks it as being pretty special. So are our authors: Kleissl is a devotee and restorer, while Niemann once ran the Mercedes-Benz archive, and they offer an immense amount of information and detail. But it's not all nuts and bolts: there are histories of the triumvirate who made the car happen, of drivers, and lesser-known car variants - the SLS, a coupé with a huge airbrake on the roof, the very early roadster versions, a hard-top roadster with little gullwing roof panels.

They do like to go in deep: one photo of a bicycle speed record behind an SL (127mph!) leads to several pages of the rider's back-story, but every subject is accompanied by such gorgeous photos that each spread is a new delight. Often it's about the glamorous rich who ran these cars: Rubirosa, de Portago, von

Karajan, the Aga Khan; Picasso used to borrow a friend's. Normally I shun the word 'celebrities' but rich black-and-white shots of the cars with Anita Ekberg, Sophia Loren, Steve McQueen and Romy Schneider convey a sense of period and just what a style impact these cars had, quite apart from winning races. One British reporter called the SL, "Beautiful in a terrifying, intimidating, threatening way."

Rather than give you all the development story up front, this book mixes it up: a bit of history, some racing, a look at the suspension, a trip over the Alps, early sketches, back to racing. It's a good scheme, and enriched by some terrific pictures: Kling passing his pit with all the crew in perfect close-up; Alfred Neubauer in *enormous* trousers perched on an SL bonnet and showing a sexy ankle to rival the Italian lady he's posing with. But I did find the layout slightly confusing with pictures often well away from the relevant text.

Race results and car specs complete a heavyweight volume that I expected to be a bit prosaic but which turned out to be an unexpected if costly pleasure.



Mercedes 300SL –
The car of the century
Hans Kleissl and Harry Niemann
Dalton Watson, £115

YOUR TRACK DAY GUIDE: WHERE TO BEGIN, WHAT TO BUY

Colin Hoad

Have you been on a track day and are wondering whether or how to move forward? Either way, this gem of a guidebook gives readers all they need to get the most out of track days. It has been written by Colin Hoad, founder and chief instructor at CAT Driver Training, the instruction facility based inside the Millbrook Proving Ground, and something of a hero to hundreds of rookie drivers he has worked with. It is designed to answer the basic questions – from what types of car you should buy, to whether to uprate the brakes and what happens if you damage it on track. Importantly, all proceeds will be donated to Mission Motorsport, the charity which supports veterans through its philosophy of 'Race, Retrain, Recover'. **JD**

Available via Amazon, £18.50.

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SPECIAL – JACK FISHER

Peter Speakman and Kenny Baird

The only reason I've heard of Jack Fisher and his 22 specials is because our Ed Foster has one but if you are a regular at Scottish sprints or hillclimbs you may well have seen one of his creations. What the cover endearingly calls 'this wee book' describes them all and the Fiat, Alfa, Lancia and Riley elements Fisher combined in his quest for home-brewed speed. Plenty of photos and smartly produced. **GC**
[licklevalleycreations.com](https://www.licklevalleycreations.com), £20

EXCEPTIONAL CARS 10: ALFA ROMEO T33

Ian Wagstaff

From Targa Florio to a Greek hillclimb is a big shift in 12 months, but Alfa only ran these V8 T33TTs for a year so the subject of this Exceptional Cars entry has done far more mileage in private hands than with the works. But since its factory career included a second in that Targa it has a proud story which continues today. In-depth history, generously illustrated including handsome studio shots. **GC**

Porter, £30

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Ashley Sutton will be looking for his third title driving the Infiniti Q50 (front row, left)

No fans for Thruxton

Covid restrictions mean that the BTCC's opening round will be behind closed doors, but there's still much to look forward to

British Touring Car Championship – Rounds 1, 2 & 3, Thruxton, Hampshire, May 8-9

DESPITE TOCA'S HOPES AND efforts, the beginning of the 2021 British Touring Car Championship season will take place behind closed doors.

Thruxton showed its potential last year to shake things up after Colin Turkington's lead over Ash Sutton evaporated by the time rounds 13, 14 and 15 were settled, and it looks like the 2021 BTCC season could be even more dramatic than the last.

Flash is back and racing with Team Dynamics. Gordon Shedden makes his return after several years away but is expecting a fight right out of the gate. "It looks mega competitive, but my fight and determination is as high as it's ever been, so I'll be giving it my all," Shedden said of his comeback.

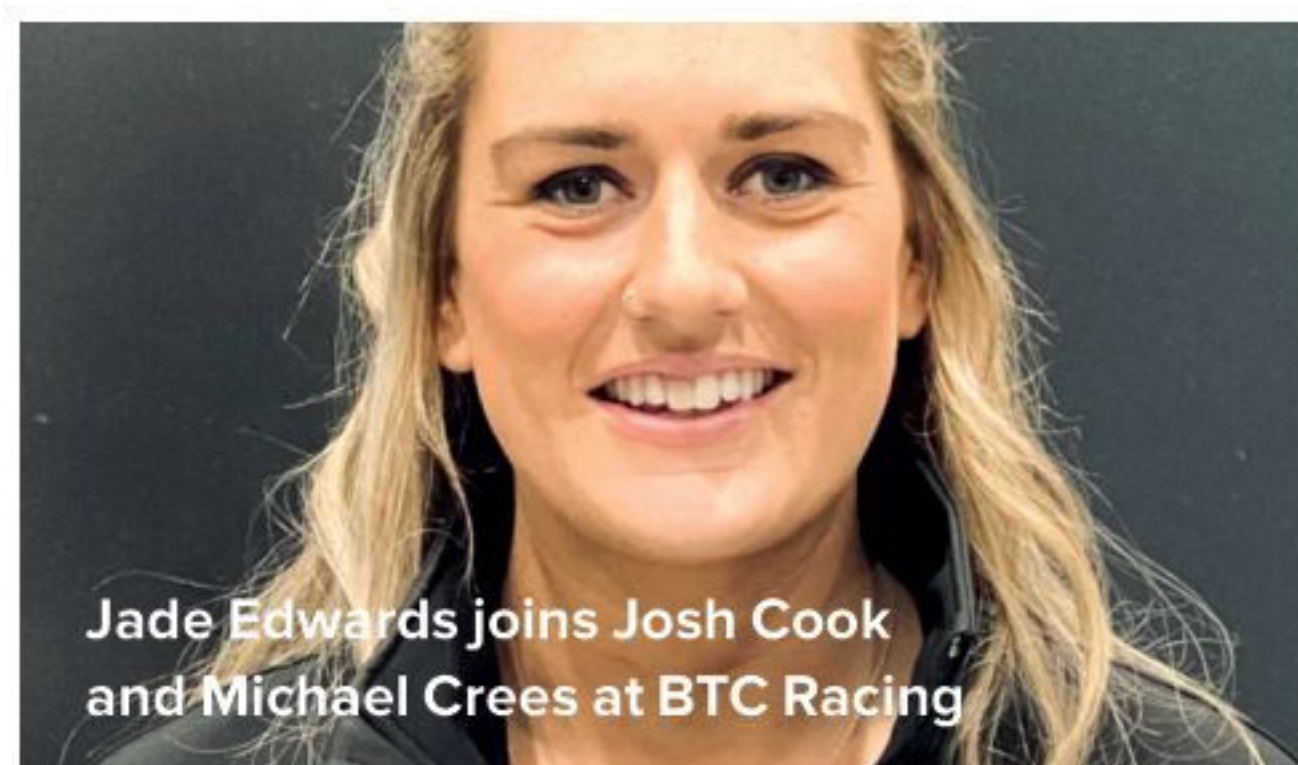
He'll be joined by Dan Rowbottom who takes up the second seat with his Cataclean sponsorship. Honda's withdrawal means there will be no third car this season, leaving no space for Dan Cammish.

Another familiar face making a return is Jason Plato, back with Power Maxed Racing for 2021 while Jade Edwards will become the first female BTCC driver in a decade, racing the BTC Civic Type R.

Then there's the usual suspects. Reigning champion Ash Sutton is now with Infiniti while 2020 title rival Colin Turkington continues with Team BMW. The latter has added a third driver in Stephen Jelley to its line-up for '21, with the 38-year-old moving over from Team Parker Racing to rejoin the outfit where he notched two of his three career victories.

Rory Butcher has left no stone unturned during the break as he hopes to put together a stronger year after finishing fifth in 2020. He's been using sim racing from home more to become better prepared for the new season.

Last year's Thruxton victor Tom Ingram has moved from Speedworks in what will be his first season away from the team. Last September he took races one and two there, but can he repeat in his Hyundai at Excelr8?



Jade Edwards joins Josh Cook and Michael Crees at BTC Racing

FORMULA 1 – 2021 MONACO GRAND PRIX

May 23, Monaco

F1's jewel in the crown is back on the calendar after last year's cancellation. The 2019 race was won by Hamilton in his Mercedes but Red Bull has never been far away around the twisty streets. Could 2021 be Max Verstappen's year?

INDYCAR – GMR GRAND PRIX

May 15, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Indiana

A warm-up before the main event, IndyCar's 'Month of May' whets the appetite and this road-course round only builds anticipation for the famous race at the end of the month. Team Penske won both Indy road-course races last year, with Josef Newgarden and Will Power the victors.

WEC – 6 HOURS OF SPA

May 1, Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium

A delay to Sebring and then Portimão has pushed the World Endurance season further and further back, but the Hypercar era kicks off at a fitting venue. Spa-Francorchamps is now set to host the first WEC race in which Hypercars compete.

WRC – RALLY DE PORTUGAL

May 20-23, Matosinhos, Porto

Round four of the 2021 WRC season is the return of Portugal to the calendar after last season's cancellation. Eventual world champion Ott Tänak was victorious in 2019 with Toyota, narrowly seeing off Hyundai's Thierry Neuville.

MOTOGP – GRAND PRIX DE FRANCE

May 16, Bugatti Circuit, Le Mans

The French GP was one of the highlights from last season as riders fought on the edge of adhesion and sometimes beyond in a rain-affected race at Le Mans. Álex Márquez was the star there last year, rising from P17 to finish runner-up to Danilo Petrucci.

MORE MAY EVENTS

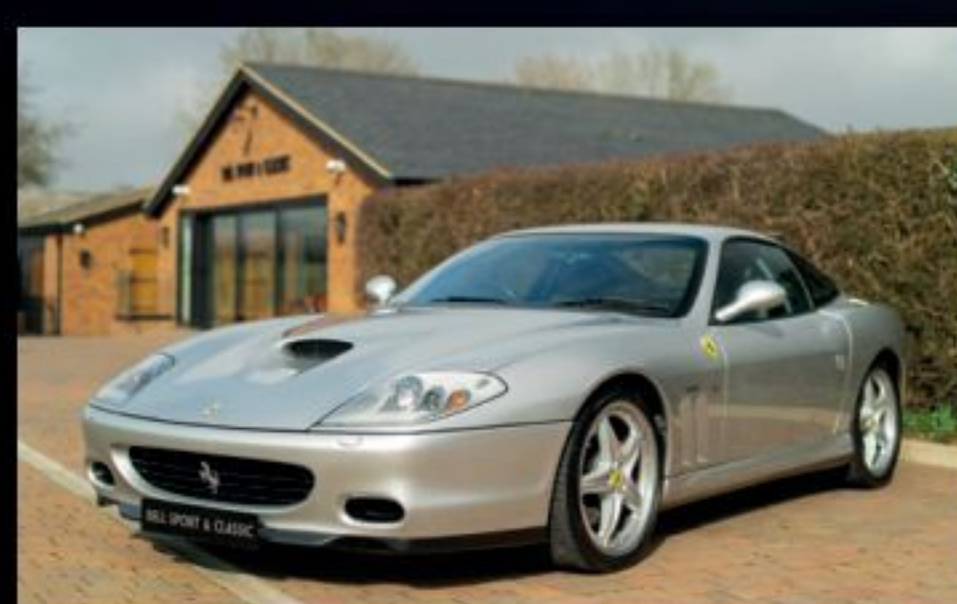
May 7-9	GT World Challenge Europe – Magny-Cours
May 15-16	BARC Race Meeting – Pembrey
May 21-23	World Superbikes – Aragon



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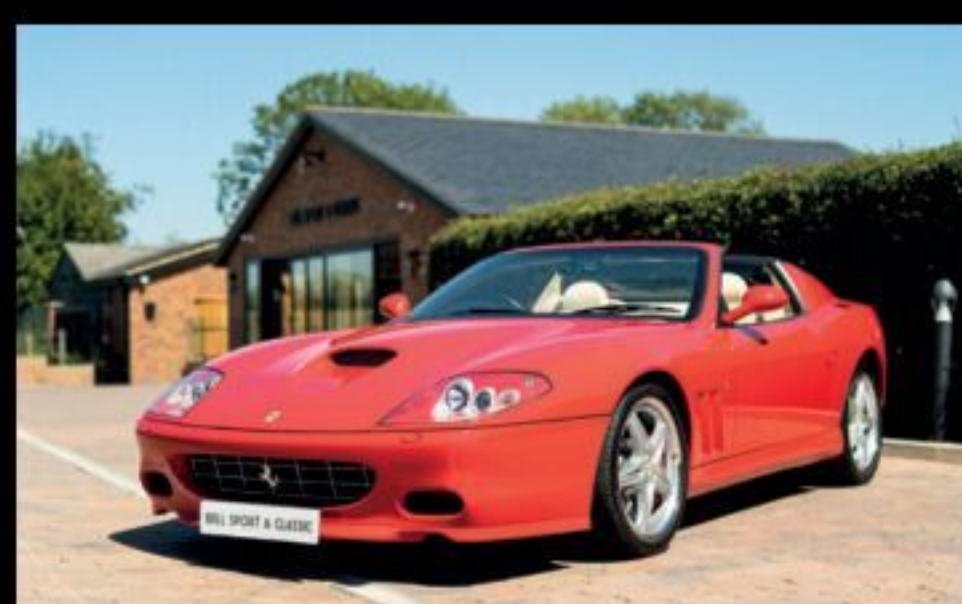
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THE
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INTERVIEW

Jacky Ickx

Passion is one thing. Team it with formidable concentration skills and childhood recall of competing in wet and icy conditions and you might get a driver like 'The Rainmaster'

WORDS: ROB WIDDOWS, PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES



Jacky Ickx was an F2 entrant in the 1967 German Grand Prix in the Tyrrell team's Matra-Ford. Right: he qualified third, behind F1's Denny Hulme and Jim Clark



HE IS A SIX-TIME LE MANS winner, Can-Am champion, the runner-up in the 1969 and 1970 Formula 1 World Championships for Brabham and Ferrari, twice World Endurance champion and Paris-Dakar rally winner. Jacky Ickx is a soulful, philosophical and enigmatic character who thinks deeply about his 32 seasons at the top of a dangerous sport. His success in so many different disciplines, and his prowess in the rain, has given him a rare status among both his peers and the fans who have followed his career from his early days as a champion motorcycle racer.

We catch up with the man many consider to be one of motor sport's greatest talents at his home in Monaco, where he's lived for the last 40 years.

Motor Sport: *Let's begin with that remarkable drive in Ken Tyrrell's Formula 2 Matra at the Nürburgring in August 1967. You made a big impression on the F1 teams that day at the German Grand Prix.*

Jacky Ickx: "Before we start... You've described me as *one of the greatest*, and I am happy if you want to say that, because you cannot say any driver is the greatest, or the greatest of all time, or whatever. I have seen

that people say Lewis Hamilton is the greatest F1 driver of all time but this is not possible because you cannot compare racing drivers from so many different eras. It is not a proper comparison because there were so many - Nuvolari, Caracciola, Fangio, Moss, Schumacher, Prost, Senna - and they were all in totally different cars in totally different times of the sport. 'One of the greatest' is enough and, of course, Lewis is one of those. The young F1 drivers are all extremely talented and gifted. They don't need to be compared in this way."

M Okay, many might agree, but let's go back to the Nürburgring in 1967, a circuit that you knew like the back of your hand from long-distance sports car racing.

Ji: "The F2 Matra was the right car at the right place at the right time. I have always believed that weekend was part of my destiny, the start of many things that came later. First, however, I want to tell you some things about me that may help to paint the full picture of my career. I never had a dream, I never imagined that I would be a grand prix driver, a Le Mans winner. At school I was at the back of the class, looking

out of the window, not knowing what I wanted to do. I thought I would become a gardener. Everyone is good at something, and my parents were waiting for me to find my destiny.

"First it was motorcycle racing, winning many races as a teenager, then into the cars and eventually Formula 1. There were so many great people helped me along this journey. The human aspect is so important. One of those was Ken Tyrrell, and my first grand prix was with him in 1966 at the Nürburgring, where I retired after a collision on the first lap. It was in '67, as you say, that I had a good race with the F2 Matra and this was for two reasons: I knew every detail of the Nürburgring having done 1000Kms races there in sports cars; and the Matra was so much lighter and more nimble than the F1 cars.

"I was third-fastest in qualifying behind Jim Clark and Denny Hulme but I had to start at the back behind all the F1 cars. I was up to fifth, with the fastest F2 lap, when the suspension broke and I had to retire. The car was jumping in the air as many as 17 times each lap. That's how it was at the Nürburgring and finally it broke. Maybe you can say it was an

"The car was jumping as many as 17 times each lap"



Keen to experience a variety of motor sport disciplines, by 1968 Ickx was driving a John Wyer Ford GT40 in the World Sportscar Championship





There was no stopping Ferrari's 'Rainmaster' at the washout French Grand Prix in 1968, with Ickx almost 2min ahead of John Surtees after 60 laps

important day because it led to my first grand prix, for Cooper, at Monza in September and then I signed with Ferrari."

M *Your first grand prix victory came in '68, in heavy rain at Rouen, but you also broke your leg in a crash in Canada, and went to Brabham for 1969, finishing runner-up to Jackie Stewart in the World Championship. Why did you leave Ferrari only to return in 1970?*

JL: "These days the top drivers focus on only one category, follow one single dream. Of course, they have the talent to do other things but an F1 driver now is fully focused on just that single discipline. We were professional freelancers if you like, racing in grands prix, sports cars and even Can-Am but in 1969 Ferrari could offer only Formula 1, which was not enough. Also, I had the drive with John Wyer's Ford

GT40 sponsored by Gulf who were with the Brabham team as well so it worked well for me. Ferrari wanted me to stay, they were happy with me, but they had nothing else to offer and I wanted to do as many types of racing as possible. Going to Brabham was a great opportunity, a new experience. I

"I knew how to find grip. Often this was away from the racing line"

had a good feeling with the car, I respected the work of Ron Tauranac and my chief mechanic was Ron Dennis. He was a good mechanic. Even then he knew where he was going and I have great admiration for what he has achieved.

"Sadly he never wants to talk with me about those days, and that's a mystery, because if I'd achieved what he has, I would be proud of it. It was a very good year for me at Brabham, winning at the Nürburgring, beating Jackie Stewart by nearly a minute at the most demanding circuit ever, that was special. Then to win

again in Canada, and come second to Jackie in the championship, 1969 was good for me. I was very young, I had no intentions of being a number two to Jack [Brabham] even if he was a world champion. He broke his ankle during that season and then it was just me, and Ron Dennis on my car, and I started to fly, to leave the nest, you know. This made me more interesting to Ferrari and I knew I would go back there for 1970 because there was Mauro Forghieri's new 312B and now also the sports car programme with the 512. Nothing is ever perfect because I had to say goodbye to John Wyer, who became so successful in long-distance racing."

M *You were F1 runner-up again in 1970 when Jochen Rindt won the title posthumously. Despite this tragedy, did you feel you could have taken the championship in those last four races?*

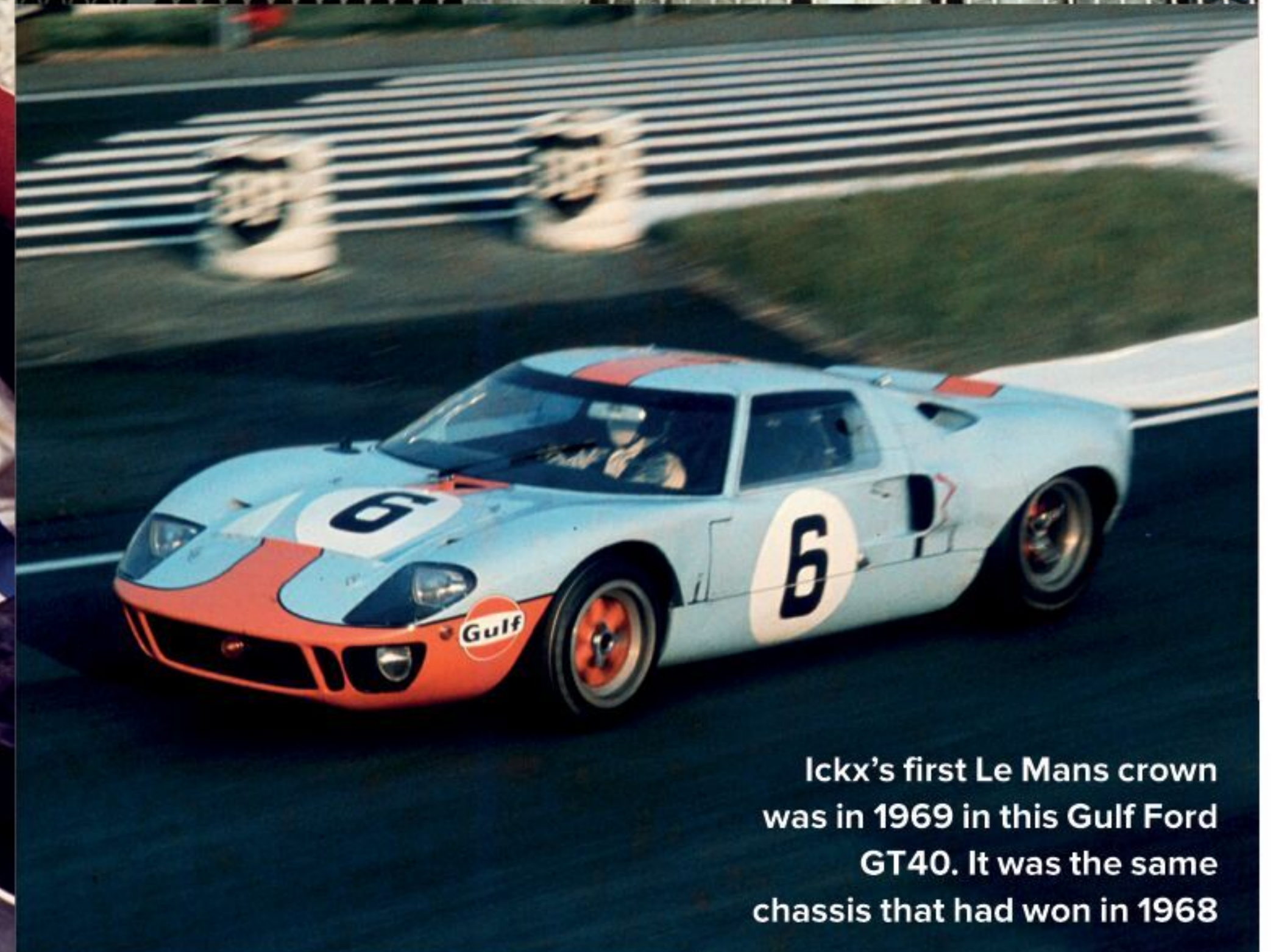
JL: "I have never thought about it like that. This was Jochen's championship and it



By 1968 the Belgian was mixing it with the F1 heavyweights. This is Ickx at Monza before a fourth podium of the season



A fourth Le Mans win came in 1977 driving a Porsche 936; further victories arrived in 1981 and '82



Ickx's first Le Mans crown was in 1969 in this Gulf Ford GT40. It was the same chassis that had won in 1968

would not have felt right, or good in any way, to have won in those circumstances. To have won without him there would not have been correct and I am happy that I did not take it. At the time there was some question about whether the title could be awarded posthumously but it was the right thing. He was a great competitor for whom I had a lot of respect. When you win a championship, you want to win it against all your great rivals. Yes, I won two of the last four races, but the Ferrari was not reliable in the first part of the season and there can be no doubt that Jochen and Lotus were the champions."

M *You have been called 'The Rainmaster'. Your skill in wet weather is well documented and some of your great victories were in the wet. How did you develop those skills?*


Ji: "I did five years of motorcycle racing and trials riding in the early days and this was very often in the winter when it was wet or with ice on the ground. When you race over

icy gravel you learn a lot about how to use the throttle, how to be smooth, how to feel grip and be aware of where there is water, where there is ice, where is grip. So when I was in grand prix cars, I knew how to find grip, and often this was away from the perfect racing line. Also, when you have this reputation for being fast in the rain it gets frustrating for the other drivers. You put the car a little bit sideways and the others slow down when they see me do this.

Sometimes in a racing car you have this sublime sensation that nothing can beat you, nothing bad will happen to you. I had this feeling in John Wyer's Ford GT40 at Spa, where it always rains, in the 1000Kms in 1968. On the first lap, I was more than 30 seconds ahead of the field by the time I got to Les Combes at the top of the hill. It was the same in the Lotus at Brands Hatch for the Race of Champions in '74. Heavy rain again and a great battle with Niki Lauda's Ferrari. I passed him on the outside of

Paddock Bend and won by just one and half seconds. We often laughed about that move over the years that followed and Niki told me he was amazed when I went by him off line in the rain. It was another example of that special mental state, that sublime feeling where you can do no wrong, that you're on another level that day."

M *Despite your success in Formula 1, you are always associated with those six wins at Le Mans. Your race in 1977 in the Porsche 936 was mesmerising. Would you agree that was your finest victory?*

Ji: "Yes, if you make me choose, then certainly it was the most incredible race, but also '69 when Jackie Oliver and I won by the smallest margin ever in the Ford GT40. You could say that was a legendary Le Mans. In '77, this was another example of finding myself in that sublime state of mind when nothing can stop you. This happens from time to time and this race, for me, was flat out, and I mean flat 



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Above: limping yet victorious – 1977 Martini Porsche 936 at Le Mans. Right: at Lotus in 1974

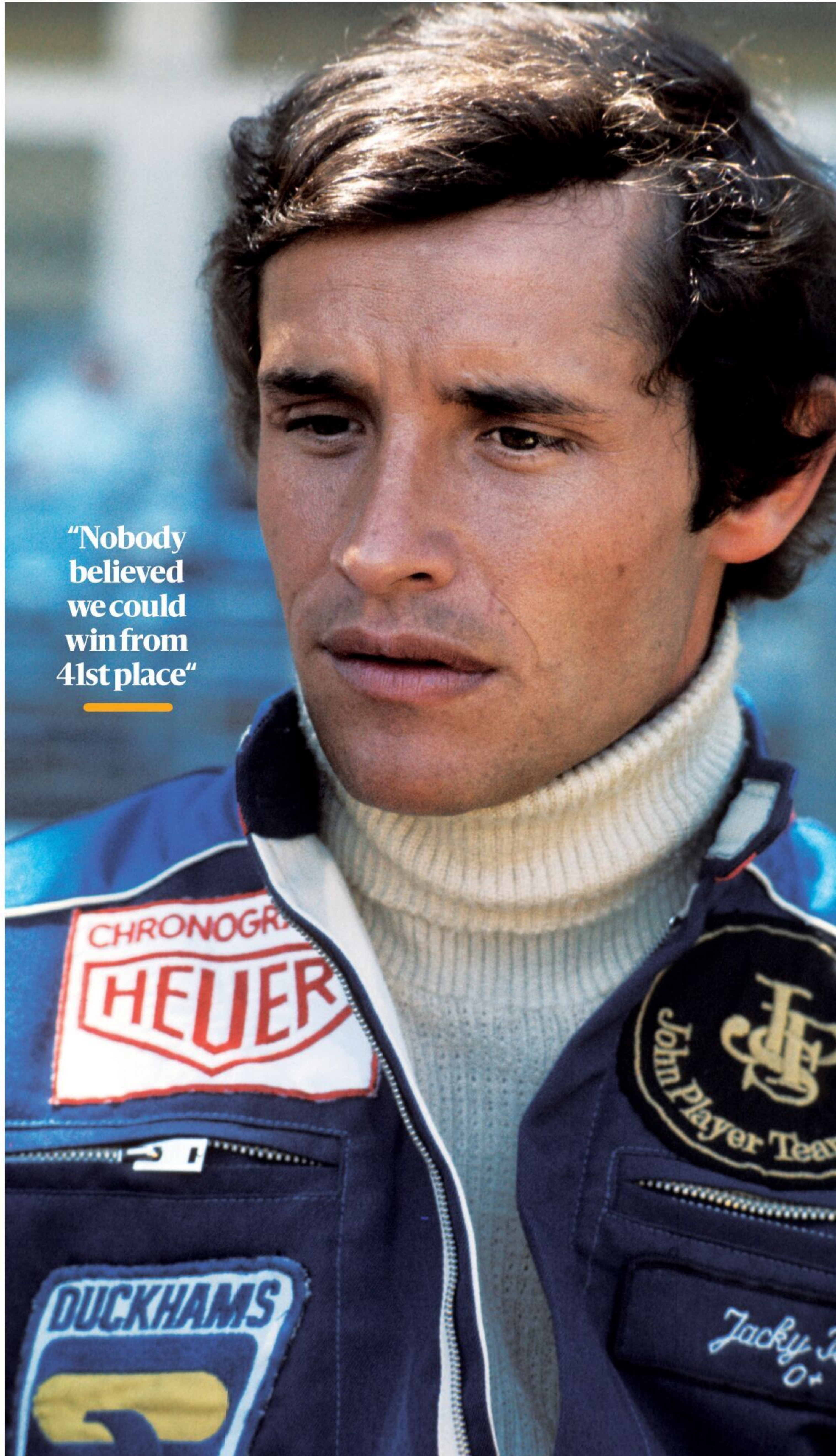
out, all the way because when the engine failed on my car after three hours I was transferred to car No4 with Hurley Haywood and Jürgen Barth, and they were right at the back after their own problems. It was raining, it was foggy, and nobody in the team believed we could win from 41st place in those conditions.

“In those days you had to nurse the car, look after your gear changes, save the brakes and take care of the car because it was race of attrition. But we had nothing to lose, we were laps behind the leader, and this gives you wings. I told the team, the other drivers, the mechanics, that it was possible to win. Every hour we picked up places, I did triple stints, more than three hours absolutely flat out in the rain, it was just fascinating – the feeling I had, the concentration at such a high level for such a long time. This ability to concentrate was a strong point for me and that weekend I simply believed we could win.

“At the end I was exhausted, physically and mentally, and then with just a few laps to go, with Hurley Haywood in the car, the engine went onto five cylinders and we had no rev counter, but we made it. So it was very, very special and a fantastic team effort. In every sport there are these moments of ‘sublimation’ – that is my word for it, you can choose your own. Senna used to speak about this state of mind in a racing car and I understood what he meant.”

 **Let's talk about the Porsche 956, the car you drove to the Endurance Championship in 1982 and '83. What made this car such an effective weapon?**

Ji: “The 956 was a huge step forward for Porsche, a completely new design and an important development programme for Norbert Singer and his team of engineers. Before we had always had a tubular chassis but now, with the 956, we had an aluminium monocoque, much more rigid, new aerodynamics, much more downforce and



“Nobody believed we could win from 41st place”

'Sublimation' in the Le Mans-winning 956. For Rothmans Porsche, 1982 was a vintage year, with a 956 1-2-3



A final F1 fling came with Ligier in 1979 but the downforce of the JS11 was not to Ickx's taste

a new five-speed gearbox. OK, it was still a very basic car compared to what we see today, very physical to drive, no power steering, no power brakes, but it was a winning car for many years.

"When I first drove the car at Weissach I knew it was special but it wasn't until we began testing at Paul Ricard that I felt the power of the aerodynamics, realised how much downforce we had. It was so fast in the corners - there was that very quick corner at the end of the straight at Ricard and I never thought it could be flat. To begin with I was lifting there, and I remember the first time I went through there flat out after lifting less and less for some laps. The next lap I couldn't do it again, I lifted, but eventually the belief in the car was there every time. Other drivers would ask me if a corner was flat, I'd say, 'Yes, of course... but sometimes I shut my eyes.'

"For me the 956 was an important car. We won Le Mans, and the World Championship twice, in '82 and in '83, and for two years this was the dominant car. People always talk about the 917, that it was a revolution - and it was - but in many ways I believe the 956 was an even greater example of Porsche's technical ability, of



Below: a fascination with Africa came with competing in the Paris-Dakar Rally. In 1983 he won the race in this Mercedes 280 GE with co-driver Claude Brasseur – the French actor



their constant desire for new technologies, new ways to win. For them, the engineering, the technology, was just as important as winning motor races and the 956 remains a great example of that attitude.”

M In 1981, the Paris-Dakar Rally became an important part of your life. You won it in 1983, and you’ve spoken about your lasting love of Africa. Can you explain the appeal of this most demanding of challenges?

JL: “It’s not simply a rally, it’s an adventure and one of the last great adventures. This event broadened my horizons – it introduced me to new cultures and ways of living that are so far removed from anything in the West. In that sense it is so much more than a race for cars or bikes, it is a huge physical and mental challenge, up to eight hours a day in the car and sometimes you don’t see another single human being. You can be at the top of a mountain, or in the high dunes of the desert, following the tracks of goats or donkeys, navigating by compass, no proper reference points. If the car fails you will wait hours for help. In ’83, when I won with the

“The Paris-Dakar Rally changed me, changed my life”

Mercedes 280, my co-pilot was the great French actor and comedian Claude Brasseur, a wonderful character who took lessons from Jean Todt in the skills of navigating through such challenging terrain. It’s not easy, sharing a car for at least 800km every day, and you can learn a lot about yourself in these circumstances.

“In ’84 I persuaded Porsche to enter the four-wheel-drive 959 and René Metge won twice with this car, a great achievement. The race, the cars, or the bikes, are just a part of the story. It’s also about opening your eyes to the way people live in these remote places. They are so hospitable in such inhospitable places and they are invisible to people in the West. I mean, they will have to wait for a Covid vaccine that does not have to be stored at -70deg C. They simply do not have the means to do that. So, yes, it changed me, changed my life and I have found myself drawn to Africa ever since.”

M You lived through a dangerous time in motor racing, competing for an incredible 32 seasons. How do you reflect on a career

that brought you so much success in so many different disciplines?

JL: “First, I want to say that it’s not all about me, me, I, I... Motor racing is absolutely a team sport. Yes, all drivers have very big egos; that is somehow necessary, and it was the same for me, but us drivers are the only ones in the limelight when the team should also be remembered. Now, as I get older, I realise that sometimes my ego was too big and so I like to underline the importance of those mechanics, engineers and all the people who help to create a successful driver.

“Do I have any regrets, did I do as well as I could have done? In my last year of grand prix racing, at Ligier in ’79 with the ground-effect cars, I realised I could no longer find those few extra tenths, those tiny margins that make the difference. I did not like those cars very much so I left Formula 1 and focused on sports cars.

“In the long distance races I never lost the speed, the strong concentration, so that is a mystery. But there are mysteries in everything we do, not just at a high level in sport. There are so many aspects to our lives, and life is very different for those in remote places. This I have discovered after so many years in the small world of motor racing.”



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Flashback...

For two decades **Maurice Hamilton** reported from the F1 paddock with pen, notebook and Canon Sure Shot camera. This month we're at a Spanish airport in 1986, a time when the sport's best travelled on charter flights with the press



IN THESE DAYS OF PRIVATE JETS, IT'S RARE FOR journalists to share a flight with an F1 driver, let alone have the chance to chat. I captured this moment on the asphalt of Santiago de Compostela Airport on the day after Ayrton Senna had won his third F1 race, the 1986 Spanish Grand Prix at Jerez. The track's comparatively remote location meant F1 folk were having to use the same charter flight, one which needed to refuel in north-west Spain prior to completing the journey to the UK.

While waiting outside the aircraft, Senna spent time chatting with Michael Tee, son of Wesley J Tee, former proprietor of *Motor Sport*. Michael, who later founded the LAT photographic agency, was deputy chairman of Championship Sporting Specialists dealing with sponsorship for five F1 teams, including Lotus.

Senna was accustomed not to only seeing Tee in the Lotus motor home, but also being familiar with his role as a trackside photographer. Senna took the opportunity to quiz Tee about what he observed during a dramatic race which finished with Senna holding off Nigel Mansell's Williams by 0.014sec.

Discovering how the Williams FW11 compared to the Lotus 98T was typical of Ayrton's relentless search for any means of improvement, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. This productive use of Senna's travel time was not new.

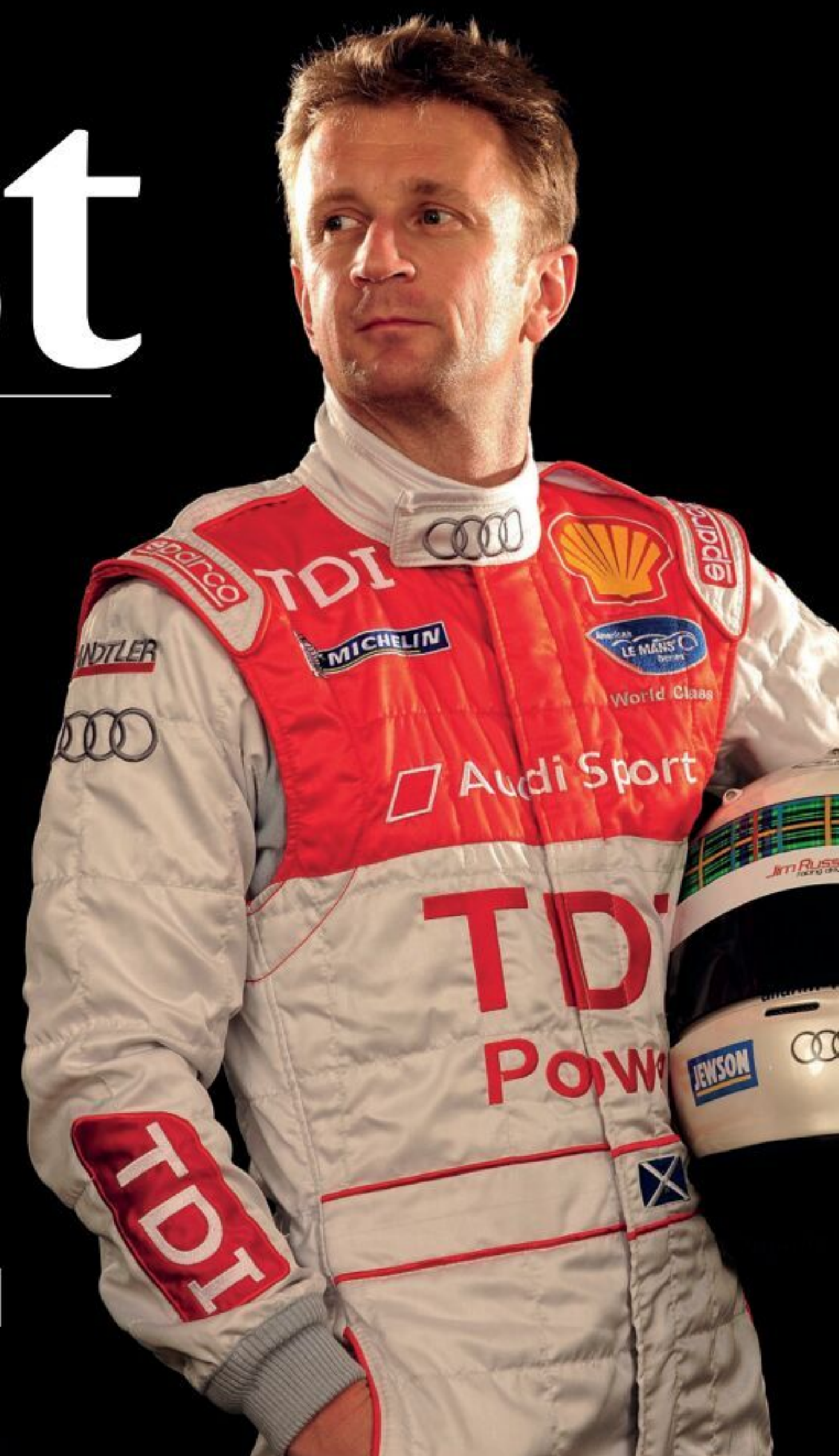
The day after his impressive first win in Portugal the previous year, Ayrton had been on the same flight as Denis Jenkinson. Never having had a conversation with *Motor Sport*'s legendary correspondent, Senna was nonetheless aware of Jenkinson's knowledge and took the opportunity to ask his opinion about previous world champions and what made them special. Rarely impressed by what racing drivers had to say, 'Jenks' came away with new-found respect for Senna's focus.

His self-serving priorities can be seen to a lesser degree with his Tacchini clothes; a personal sponsorship deal arranged during his time with Toleman. Ayrton had insisted on continuing with the Italian fashion company despite having become the standard bearer for John Player Team Lotus and its aggressive black and gold branding. Few at Lotus were likely to argue with his demands after the Jerez victory. Judging by the intensity of this discussion, however, the man himself clearly believed there was always room for improvement.

MY Greatest RIVAL

ALLAN McNISH
ON DAVID BRABHAM

Allan McNish recalls his blistering tussles in British Formula 3 and sports cars against an obstinate 'Brabs' – an opponent who gave his all



“YOU MIGHT EXPECT ME TO choose Mika Häkkinen. We fought each other hard for the GM-Lotus European championships in 1988, but I’m going for David Brabham. Our paths crossed early, and late, in my career and I’ve always thought his talent has never been given the recognition it truly deserves.

We fought hammer and tongs for the British F3 championship in 1989 and then we came up against each other again in sports cars. I was at Audi, he was at Panoz, and later at Peugeot. Racing against Brabs, there were some titanic battles.

At Silverstone in '89, the British GP F3 support race, I'd been out for a couple of races after an accident when the roll hoop came off and I smacked my head, so I'd had some concussion. I was on pole, David alongside me, and as we went into Copse he was on the outside and I thought, 'Right I've got you covered.' Then, mid-corner, he was still there, going round me on the outside of Copse... That was a brave move, but I got him back at the end and won the race.

Now this is weird, because we had a repeat of that situation at the Sebring 12

Hours when Brabs was in the Acura and I was with Audi. Coming into turn three, a left-hander, he was on the inside and I went past him right round the outside and I was thinking, 'Right, you b****d, I've got you back.' After the race I said to him, 'That was for Silverstone '89,' and he told me he was thinking the same thing.



Head-to-head

McNish	vs	Brabham
5	WINS	6
3	POLES	6
3	FASTEST LAPS	2
9	PODIUMS	11
70	POINTS	80

Stats from the 1989 British Formula 3 Championship

That's how strong our rivalry was. David was very underrated but he had so much ability. I wanted him as a team-mate at Porsche. I'd rather be with him than against him, but the Porsche programme stopped so that never happened. We did share a Risi Competizione Ferrari 333 SP at Daytona in 2001 and that was an education for me. I'd done quite well by then but I learnt a lot from the way he analysed the car and the way he went about racing. He always gave his all, from those early days when we first came across each other.

Rivalry can teach you about yourself as well as your competitor. You don't learn much from an easy race, an easy win, but a rival makes you raise your game. David was very into mind management. He was a bit older than me and understood what made him tick before I knew what made me tick. My other big rival, all the time, was me. I mean, I was always pushing myself to dig deep, keep on doing the lap times, giving myself targets to hit. All drivers are emotional people but we need to keep our emotions under control. Talent and flair are not enough. You need to have the mental strength to come back after your first big accident and be able to bounce back after a bad season.”

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The legend lives on

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the E-type, Bremont has unveiled limited edition timepieces... with a few extras

BRITISH WATCH BRAND BREMONT formed a partnership with Jaguar more than a decade ago when it made a bespoke clock for the C-X75 concept car. It followed that four years later with gold watches to complement the continuation Special GT E-types built by Jaguar Classic, then produced a range named after the Mark I and Mark II saloons (and added a MKIII for good measure).

So when it was announced two years ago that Jaguar Classic would produce 25 continuation D-type racers to bring the number built to a round 100, it was only right that there should be another Bremont special - this time a run of 300 chronographs with dials in the blue livery of the Ecurie Ecosse Le Mans winners of 1956 and '57.

You won't be surprised to discover that the maker is set to mark this year's 60th anniversary of the regular E-type with another round of limited editions, the designs of which honour the two 1961 launch cars.

The gunmetal grey coupé that was driven 'flat-out' from Coventry to the Geneva Motor Show by Jaguar PR man Bob Berry and the BRG roadster delivered the following day by the marque's legendary test driver Norman Dewis after he was told to "drop everything" and get to Switzerland have been used as the inspiration for six matched pairs of fully-restored E-types.

Three pairs will be in a specially produced Flat Out Grey and three in Drop Everything Green in memory of the original show cars.

Accordingly, the watches that go with them will be made in two editions - 60 with grey ceramic bezels and grey 'racing' straps and 60 with green bezels. The steel chronographs feature winding rotors in the form of miniature Jaguar steering wheels and dials inspired by the E-type's Smiths instruments. Each watch will be delivered in a bridle leather trimmed box along with a superb pair of rally timer stop watches, which can be attached to a car dashboard or used as desk clocks.

But that's not all that buyers get, because the price also includes an otherwise impossible-to-obtain experience - a trip to Jaguar's test centre for a drive of the Mark I E-type once owned by 10-times motorcycle world champion Mike Hailwood and a few laps in one of the lightweight E-type competition cars.

Bremont founders Nick and Giles English are especially proud of the project because they still own and drive the 1970 E-type roadster that belonged to their late father.

"He bought it as a wreck more than 35 years ago and rebuilt it from the ground up," says Nick. "We still remember seeing it in hundreds of pieces on the workshop floor."

Bremont Jaguar E-type 60th anniversary edition set, £12,995. bremont.com



FRENCH WATCH BRAND BRM (NAMED Bernard Richards Manufacture after its founder) has backed numerous motor sport teams and drivers since its founding in 2003. Its latest partnership is with China's DS Techeetah, the double Formula E champion with which BRM has collaborated on a run of 42 limited edition watches - 21 three-hand models and 21 chronographs. Each has a 44mm case, a dial mounted on tiny shock absorbers and a finish that mirrors the livery of the cars.

BRM DS Techeetah, £4500

(three-hand), £7000 (chronograph).

brm-manufacture.com



IN ITS RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF COOL, Breitling has teamed up with Australian motorcycle customiser (and now international lifestyle brand) Deus to create a limited edition version of the Top Time chronograph. It features a case back engraved with the image of a speeding motorcycle and a dial carrying the Deus logo. Breitling CEO Georges Kern has also recruited Deus-backed motorcycle racer and surfer Forrest Minchinton to the brand's 'squad' of inspiring individuals.

Breitling Top Time Deus, £4100.

breitling.com

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LETTERS

FOR MANY OF US WHO WERE FANS OF FORMULA 1 HE WAS THE VOICE AND THE embodiment of motor racing, which started in 1949 and ended in 2001. I refer of course to the sad news of Murray Walker's passing. Born in Birmingham, he was one of our own.

From his memorable partnership with the late James Hunt to his infamous 'Murrayisms' he was truly a great gent. His passionate yawp and yowl style of commentary was unmistakeable to a generation. Indeed, who can forget his famous remark, "I've got to stop now because I've got a lump in my throat," when Damon Hill won in Japan, thus securing the World Championship.

Less well known was his service during the war when he was commissioned into the Royal Scots Greys and took part in the push from Normandy to the Baltic.

On a personal note, I shall remember the Murray Walker I met 11 years ago in Birmingham when I was working on a charity project and he added his support and generously donated a signed copy of his coffee table-sized book to sell to raise funds which he readily did without me even asking.

Thanks for the memory, Murray.

MARK DABBS, GREAT WYRLEY, W MIDS

racing can be overestimated. Our thoughts are with his family and his many friends, Godspeed, Murray.

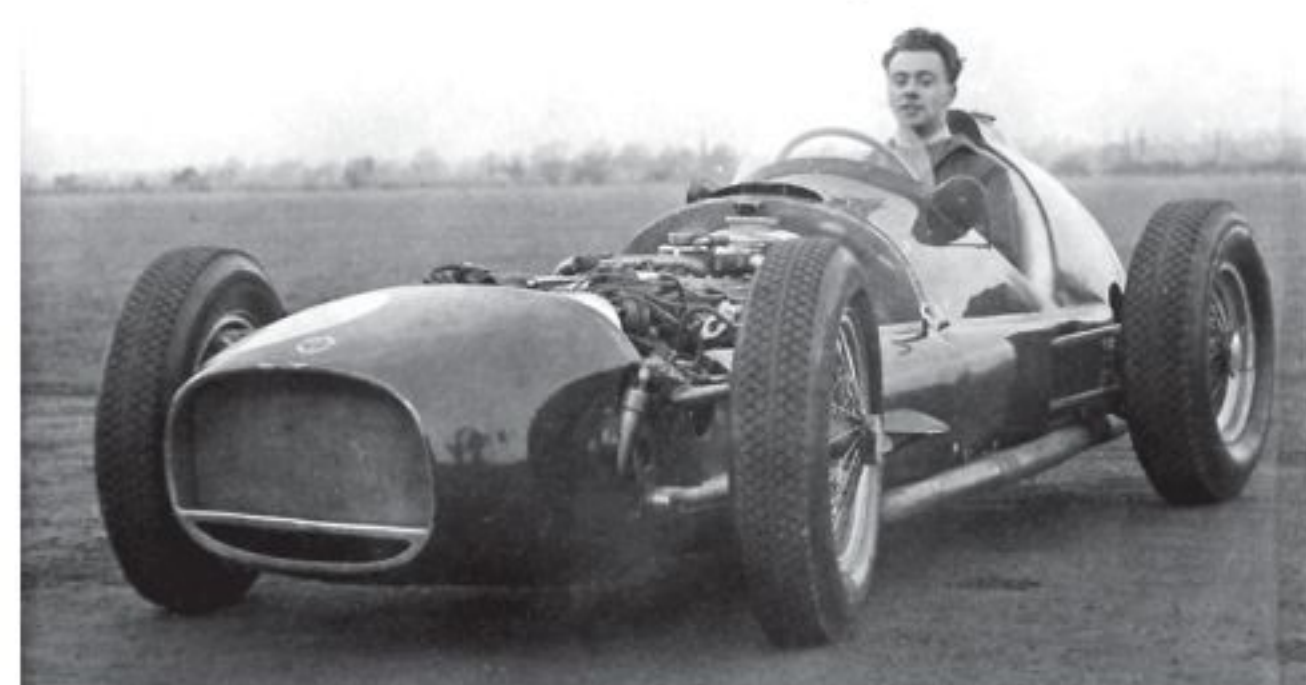
MARK BOWLEY, WHITWICK, LEICESTERSHIRE

CHRIS CRAFT, WHO DIED IN FEBRUARY, has left us with many great memories, including this one from 1966. He arrived very late on the grid at Brands Hatch for a BRSCC race, and wove his way from the back through to his position. Moments before the start his car caught fire, with flames underneath beginning to spread.

A marshal pulled open the driver's door to rescue him, but Chris pushed him away and shut it. Then he realised there was a fire, and leapt out. He said afterwards he thought the marshal was trying to stop him racing because he should have been at the back of the grid. No doubt the stewards wouldn't have thought this an acceptable explanation, but it does show just how committed Chris was. I was eight at the time, and vividly remember the drama, from a few feet away at the edge of the track.

Before he turned professional, Chris worked in the Ford of Britain PR office at Brentwood. He told me that at work one Monday morning 'the guv'nor' (my father, Walter Hayes) came to see him holding a local newspaper report and asked if he was the C Craft who had won a saloon car race on the previous weekend, beating Anglias in a Jaguar. Chris admitted that he was, expecting to be fired, but Walter said, "In that case you shouldn't be working for Ford in an office, you should be racing for Ford." And so he did.

RICHARD HAYES, OXFORD



No grand prix driver but our correspondent Don McLean trying out the V16 BRM's cockpit

I ENJOYED YOUR BRM V16 ARTICLE AND splendid cutaway drawing [*Forever England, February*]. In the 1950s I was a student in the Automobile Department at Loughborough College, and one day Sir Alfred Owen arranged to bring a BRM grand prix car for the students "to have a look at". The delivery driver was a bit doubtful about this, imagining that it would disappear under a scrum of students and when they departed there would be just a few nuts and bolts lying on the ground. For this reason he took the bonnet away with him. I am left with a lovely memory of that day, and the photo [above] of me sitting in the car.

DON MACLEAN, CLIFTON UPON TEME, WORCS

I WAS DEEPLY SADDENED TO HEAR THE news of Murray Walker's passing. His high-octane, fast-paced commentary and infectious energy made even the duller of

races a joy to watch. I was fortunate enough to meet Murray at a book signing for his first autobiography, post-retirement (not that he ever fully retired). Completely starstruck, I was rendered speechless in his presence. Sensing my embarrassment, he mitigated the situation by simply saying, in that oh so familiar style and tone: "Thank you, young man. Good evening!" A class act. Thank you, Murray. Rest In Peace.

RICHARD NEWELL, SOLIHULL, W MIDS

I CAN'T BELIEVE MURRAY'S START-WATCH has finally stopped. Murray was a big part of the reason for my enthusiasm for motor racing. Right from the time I started to become interested in the late 1970s, through the '80s and '90s Murray was motor racing; whether it was F1, bikes, rallycross or whatever it just didn't sound right without his unique commentary to describe it.

I was lucky enough to get to say hello to him at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in 2016 and I've never been more starstruck by anyone before or since. On that occasion Murray was accompanied by a minder, required not so much to stop us from talking to him as to ensure that he didn't talk to us for so long that he missed his next appointments. Whoever said that you shouldn't meet your heroes had obviously never met Murray Walker.

Murray will be very much missed, and I don't think his contribution to British motor

IT WAS NICE TO READ ANDREW FRANKEL mentioning the restoration of the Lotus 56B turbine car [*Andrew Frankel column, February*]. It is hard to believe that, as I write this, it is half a century almost to the day that I stood at Paddock Hill to witness this car's Formula 1 debut in the 1971 Race of Champions. It whooshed past me almost silently with a complete lack of drama - unlike the flat-12 of Clay Regazzoni's Ferrari 312B2 (also making its debut) and the BRM V12s. The car had yet to have its sides bulged to accommodate the extra kerosene needed for a full length GP.

Emerson Fittipaldi whooshes into history in his Lotus 56B, the first turbine-powered grand prix car, at the Race of Champions, Brands Hatch 1971



I hope the car is restored to Gold Leaf colours rather than the horrid black and gold of 'Worldwide Racing' - a legal ploy to prevent seizing of assets from Team Lotus in Italy following Rindt's accident of the previous year.

The 56B had large brakes but needed them as on tick-over it could lap Silverstone at 80mph. However the engine, only required a Hot Section Inspection every 1800 hours and had a Time Between Overhauls of 3600hours - how many seasons is that?

The real Lotus story from the Race of Champions that year was that Tony Trimmer had been promised a run in a 49 but due to engine issues this was switched to a 72 while Fittipaldi ran the 56B. However, this 72 would become Fittipaldi's regular race car and Chapman and Fittipaldi did not want to risk it being damaged. So the mechanics were instructed to disconnect the alternator. The unknowing Trimmer was lucky to manage the five laps that he did before the battery ran flat.

DR PETER O'DONNELL, EPSOM, SURREY

GRAND PRIX PHOTO
I HAVE JUST BEEN WATCHING THE HORSE racing from Cheltenham and I was rightly impressed by the commentator, who at the start of the race described each rider by the colours being worn and then, throughout the race, continued to identify the horse and rider and pointed out the colour of the silks

that the jockey was wearing. So it was easy to follow for someone not well connected to the sport.

What a contrast to motor racing. Invariably the commentators only refer to the name of the driver, and obviously expect the viewing public to understand. This year's F1 has seen many changes of driver and their cars, so we now need to re-learn last year's identities and change to this year's. I'm already confused!

David Croft on Sky is the worst offender. He gives no indication of which car he is talking about, just the driver's name. It will, no doubt, satisfy the purists but it will not attract new viewers who, I suspect, will watch for a few minutes, then switch channels. It's the same all over motor sport. Le Mans, Formula E, Porsche Cup, etc.

Jackie Stewart got it right. "The red car on your screens now is a Ferrari driven by Michael Schumacher." Clear, precise and informative. If only other motor sport commentators would take a leaf out of Sir Jackie's book, and aim to give us, the viewing public, better information.

NICK ARGENT, NORTHWICH, CHESHIRE

READING THROUGH YOUR INTERESTING article on the stillborn McQueen film project [*McQueen's lost movie, February*] I was struck by the dismissive tone taken towards the film *Grand Prix*. Then it

occurred to me: it was being said by people who have never seen the film. Oh, yes I have, many will say: I disagree. Few have.

Grand Prix was a Cinerama film, meant to be seen on a huge screen offering a 146 degree field of view. The largest British Cinerama screen was, I believe, 25m x 9m. Much bigger than the most generous cinema or large screen modern TV, much less your smart phone. But the smaller US size for Cinerama screens was 26m x 10m; the larger, 32m x 11m. This, plus the fact that Cinerama was also created with a seven-track magnetic sound system then quite beyond the reach of any standard theatre sound system - much less home systems. The experience of seeing this film in its correct venue was breathtaking.

So saying you have 'seen' *Grand Prix*, if in a standard theatre setting or home theatre, is the equivalent of comparing a go-kart track to the Nordschleife. Sadly, there are but a handful of true Cinerama theatres still extant, but it can be hoped that a time will come where the 'roadshow' (i.e. full-length) version of this great film will yet again brighten the screen - and opinions.

NORMAN E GAINES JR, HARTSDALE NY, USA

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Niki Lauda

Winner in 1975 & 1976

S EVEN DRIVERS SHARE LAUDA'S RECORD of two Monaco GP victories - and eight have conquered the principality's streets more frequently still. In the Austrian's case, however, the greatest significance is not so much the races he did win as one he didn't.

Lauda scored back-to-back successes in the mid-1970s, the first en route to the world title and the second ahead of the dramatic summer in which he recovered from being read the last rites to sitting on the grid at Monza weeks later.

In the first of those, he set a scorching pole position time, described by Denis Jenkinson (*Motor Sport*, June 1975): "Lauda went out and did a shattering 1min 26.40sec, which rocked everyone on their heels. It was as if he had said to himself, 'There are too many aces up here with me in the 1min 27sec bracket, I'd better reset the standard.'" His subsequent victory would be Ferrari's first in Monaco since 1955.

The following season Lauda did it again. Jenks wrote: "Lauda was on his own, driving with a visibly neat precision that many of the others could have benefited from watching."

As he signed off his '75 report, Jenks noted, "It was sadly ironical that neither Graham Hill, who has won the Monaco GP five times, nor BRM, who also have had five victories at Monaco, were able to qualify. Times change

and there is no point in dwelling on the past." It had been while driving for BRM in 1973 that Lauda triggered the chain of events paving the way to those victories. Heavily in debt as a result of buying his way into F1, Lauda had bluffed to get a BRM seat on the basis of sponsorship that didn't exist - and payment was due. He had a strong race though, running third ahead of Ickx's Ferrari... until his transmission broke.

As Lauda told *Motor Sport* in 2017, "That evening [BRM boss] Louis Stanley said to me over dinner, 'D'you know what? You don't need to pay money any more. Your performances have been outstanding. You just need to sign a contract for 1974 here and now.' I was happy with that, signed and returned home.

"At the time my cousin's secretary also worked as my PA and we had a joke. I'd always say, 'Let me know when Ferrari calls.' On the Monday after Monaco I got back and she said, 'Ferrari called.' I didn't believe her, but she insisted that Luca di Montezemolo had phoned. I rang him and he confirmed that the Old Man wanted to see me. It was because of my Monaco performance. I told him that I'd love to, but that I had just committed to a new deal with BRM. He said, 'Don't worry, I'll fix the legal issues.'"

Thanks to a 24-lap cameo in Monte Carlo, his future was set. ➤

Lauda in the Ferrari 312T2 on his way to victory at Monaco, 1976. Left: qualifying at the same race





Michael Schumacher

Winner in 1994, 1995, 1997, 1999 & 2001

DRIVERS HAVE DIVIDED OPINION EVER since the French decided cars had an alternative purpose as competitive tools - but few have done so to the extent of Schumacher. People have a tendency to focus on his professional fouls (Adelaide 1994, Jerez 1997, Monaco 2006), but such indiscretions are dwarfed by many moments of greatness.

The 1992 Monaco GP marked his 12th F1 start and he finished fourth, beaten only by Ayrton Senna and the customarily dominant Williams-Renaults of Nigel Mansell and Riccardo Patrese. His team-mate that year was Martin Brundle.

"You have to build up to a crescendo in Monaco," Brundle says, "The track evolves and it'll come back to bite you at some point if you've knocked your car about. You have to keep dialling in to an ever-changing track, as a year's worth of rubbish, fuel and diesel are lifted up and replaced by tyre rubber. It rewards people that can carry the requisite speed without making mistakes, so those who are on top of their cars. It's okay making a

small error at a mundane Abu Dhabi, but you can't do that in Monaco. That's why the greats have always shone there, despite it being slow. They have that mastery of their car and the conditions - and Michael was very strong there for all those reasons, especially with his mastery of left-foot braking."

Having overseen Senna's first race in Monaco with Toleman, Pat Symonds was still with the team eight years later after it had morphed into Benetton. "There are so many parallels between Michael and Ayrton," he says, "but there were also differences. Michael was much more professional, typified by his approach to fitness. Ayrton was actually pretty unfit when he joined us and I was surprised that somebody so intelligent hadn't realised what it would take to drive an F1 car!"

"There's a myth that engineers are clever and design cars to suit drivers. What we do is set them up and develop them in a way the driver wants. Michael set his car up to be very unstable, which is why most of his team-mates struggled like hell against him. We'd show

them what Michael was doing and tell them to try the same thing, but it wasn't necessarily the best option for them. It surprised me that we'd set the car up to be that unstable, yet lap times would get better and better. When you're at Monaco, where you need to change direction a lot and get a good turn-in to slower corners, for which F1 cars aren't designed, that unstable set-up worked well.

"We had data acquisition and our first telemetry systems back then, though it was all primitive compared with today. Data in Monaco is crap because the car is out of control most of the time and it's a difficult circuit to analyse. People who are able to drive consistent laps are pretty damned good, and Michael was certainly one of those."

In addition to his five victories, the German put in a big drive in 2006. Dispatched to the back of the grid for his qualifying subterfuge, when he caused a yellow flag to prevent rivals setting faster times, he came through to finish fifth. It was a race he could have started from the front.



Stirling Moss

Winner in 1956, 1960 & 1961

“EVERY TIME THE TWO MARANELLO CARS gained ground, Moss would nip by a slower car and the slight baulking would put the Ferraris back to 5sec. This was the luck of the game and, on three occasions, Moss just got by a slower car going into Sainte-Dévôte and the American drivers lost valuable yards. This sort of ‘traffic driving’ was the saviour for Moss, for there is no one to match him at lapping slower cars and taking every opportunity with an uncanny foresight. It was like a fighter plane being chased by a superior enemy and being saved by dodging into clouds.” Such was Denis Jenkinson’s perception of the 1961 Monaco GP. It was a race that Moss himself considered to be his finest, though he had made his mark at the track a decade beforehand.

In 1950, he scored a heat win in the 500cc F3 event supporting the second round of motor racing’s freshly instigated World Championship – and went on to beat fellow Cooper-JAP driver Harry Schell in the final. He was back two years later to take part in the GP itself, the only time it was run for sports cars, but after setting the early pace in a Jaguar C-type he was caught out by an oil slick that claimed several cars.

His first victory came in 1956, when he juggled initially between Maserati’s carburetted and newer, fuel-injected 250Fs. Moss preferred the former, which caused momentary concern during the opening practice day. The team had left the older car in its garage, the updated model packed up... and Moss was keen to chase a cash prize worth £100 for setting quickest time. The only way to get to Maserati’s garage

was via the track, Horace Gould lent Moss his 250F to drive around, collect his own car and complete the lap in that, before taking an ultimately unsuccessful tilt at fastest lap.

The race was a little more straightforward. According to Jenks, “Moss chopped his way into the hairpin first, the two Lancia/Ferraris went round wheel to wheel and then the whole bunch came screaming up behind the pits. The roar as the cars came out of the tunnel was wonderful and then Moss came round the corner into the pit area in a controlled power-slide and it was seen that he was well out in front.”

Juan Manuel Fangio was closing significantly as the race drew towards its end, but Moss was pacing himself as he completed 100 laps.

Moss started on the front row in 1957, led briefly in ’58 and looked set to win in ’59 until sidelined by transmission failure, but he scored his second Monaco F1 victory the following season. First time out in Rob Walker’s Lotus 18, he came through to take a comfortable win. Jenks: “Moss reeled off the laps with consistency, handling the Lotus as though it were glass.”

Ferrari was far better prepared than any rival when grand prix racing switched to 1.5-litre engines in 1961. It would take more than a power advantage to beat Moss, however, especially at Monaco. Of the closing stages, Jenks wrote: “All round that last lap Moss was watching his mirrors and Ginther was just as determined as ever and they crossed the line 3.6sec apart.” Or as Moss put it, “If I’d matched my qualifying time on every one of the 100 laps, I’d have beaten myself by only about 40 seconds.”

Almost 20 years ago, Schumacher equalled Graham Hill’s record of five Monaco wins. Above right: Moss’s first victory in 1956



Lewis Hamilton

Winner in 2008, 2016 & 2019

THURSDAY MORNING, ANY YEAR YOU CARE to mention. As Formula 1 cars filter onto the track, they all look much as though they are on installation laps. All except one, which arrives at the swimming pool significantly faster than the others, an uncoiled spring at its wheel, impatient to get on with the job he loves.

Lewis Hamilton's love affair with the circuit commenced long before he'd signed a McLaren F1 contract. Monaco's traditional F3 curtain-raiser was dropped after 1997, to make way for a Formula 3000 race, but was revived on a one-off basis in 2005 as a double-header and Hamilton won both races. He returned the following year in GP2, absolutely cruised to victory from pole and could quite easily have maintained his 100 per cent record on his first F1 appearance here in 2007.


McLaren team-mate Fernando Alonso qualified ahead of him but did so with a lighter car. Even so, Hamilton might well have beaten him had he not had to negotiate Mark Webber's Red Bull during his quickest lap. In the race, McLaren opted for a two-stop strategy, although

Hamilton's fuel load would have allowed him to convert to one. As it was, McLaren twice brought him in a couple of laps early when leaving him out on a light fuel load would have given him a tilt at jumping ahead of Alonso. Once they were safely first and second the team instructed them not to race. Afterwards, Hamilton looked downcast for a driver that had just finished on the podium for the fifth time in as many grands prix. "I knew there would be no way to overtake Fernando on the road," he said, "so the only chance was to apply pressure - but he's a two-time world champion and doesn't make mistakes. Why did I come in early? Probably something to do with safety cars. I'm looking forward to talking about it..."

Then as now, Neil Oatley was McLaren's director of design and development. "I think that race was probably where he came of age," he says. "He had beaten Fernando in a couple of races, but hadn't yet won one. I'm sure he was already aware of how good he was, but Monaco probably convinced him that he was the best. Fernando was world champion and

always quick in Monaco, but Lewis had his measure - at the least. It would have been close if we'd allowed Lewis to run longer, but we took the decision to slow them both down and I recall Lewis's disappointment, because he felt he could have won. Fernando was constantly on the radio, asking us to make sure Lewis backed off. That probably sowed the seeds for the way things deteriorated as the season went on."

Hamilton's maiden Monaco F1 win, in 2008, owed a little to luck. He clipped a barrier on lap six, puncturing the right rear, but with the field spread out in the wet he lost only three places. Now out of sync with the rest of the field, he had also unwittingly put himself on an ideal strategy. His next pit visit came at the perfect time to switch to dry rubber, while rivals were forced to make additional stops. Luck played its part, but that error apart he had driven well.

His appetite for the track shows no sign of being sated and no one is betting against him adding to his tally of wins next month. Hamilton might be from Stevenage, but Monaco is both his adopted and natural home. 

GETTY IMAGES

Lewis Hamilton's win in 2019
marked Mercedes' sixth
consecutive victory
of the season. Left: a
fortuitous win in 2008





Calmness and concentration captured by Colin Waldeck at the 1964 Monaco GP; this image is now in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery. Far right: Hill's last F1 win came at Monaco in 1969

GETTY IMAGES, DPPI



Graham Hill

Winner in 1963, 1964, 1965, 1968 & 1969

HIS 'MR MONACO' SOBRIQUET WAS WELL earned. By the time he notched up his fifth and final victory, no other driver had more than three to their name.

In 1968, Dave 'Beaky' Sims was a 22-year-old race mechanic, freshly promoted to Lotus's F1 crew. "I'd been working in F2," he says, "but after Jim Clark's death at Hockenheim the old man [Colin Chapman] shifted me to the F1 side. I remember testing at Snetterton before we went to Monaco and the way Graham spoke about the upcoming race was striking. He loved the place - the glitz, the glamour, going to the casino and dining at the royal palace. He always packed a dicky bow for Monaco and I'm sure he didn't do that for any other race. He seemed different when we were there, cheerful in a way that didn't necessarily apply at other tracks.


"Some of his job lists could be outrageous, but we were happy to do the work. That had been the biggest difference between Graham and Jim Clark; he'd be fiddling around during practice sessions, trying to get things right, while Jim would tell us not to worry, that he'd drive around any problems and we could adjust the car, if necessary, in the evening.

"It wasn't like that at Monaco in 1968, though: he just jumped in, got on with it, bagged pole and won. Before the start, I remember Colin chatting to Jackie Oliver [recruited to replace Clark] and telling him to take a leaf out of Graham's book by staying out of trouble. Unfortunately, he crashed on the opening lap!"

Hill's son Damon emulated his father by becoming world champion, but never won in Monaco - although he was on course to do so in 1996 until his engine blew. "My Monaco experience differed from his," he says. "My first attempt to qualify there in F1 was with Brabham in 1992, but I couldn't use all the gears because there wasn't room for my legs in the cockpit. I had to trundle around the hairpin in third!

"You have to ask what it was that Dad was doing right. People say he was hard on his cars, rougher than Jim Clark on the transmission or whatever, but he can't have been that bad if he managed to win five times in Monaco.

"I don't have recollections of him telling me anything about his wins, but I've read what he wrote. When he won in 1965, after having had to get out and push his way out of an escape road, he described a moment the following afternoon, sitting on a beach, reflecting on what he'd just done and feeling an enormous sense of achievement at having overcome all the obstacles Monaco can throw at you.

"It's a circuit that punishes the slightest lapse in concentration and Dad took a great deal of pride in his meticulousness when it came to preparing for races. He applied himself and was rewarded for that. He had a great ability to focus and good stamina because he did a lot of rowing. I think it speaks volumes that he also won Indy and Le Mans, other races that require a great deal of concentration for long periods. That's where he was particularly good." 



Senna took pole in 1988, 1.4sec ahead of Alain Prost, but crashed on lap 67. Upset, Senna walked away to his apartment nearby

GETTY IMAGES

Ayrton Senna

Winner in 1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992 & 1993

“AT ONE STAGE I MANAGED TO EXTRICATE myself from the pits and went to watch at the entrance to the swimming pool, standing right behind the guardrail. Watching him through there was otherworldly - and remember that in those days they hadn't moved back the barriers to give them a bit more space. It was just an Armco tunnel - real life in fast forward. He was just incredibly fast around there and never more so than on that day. He believed very strongly that God was protecting him, so perhaps it had something to do with that, I don't know...”

1



1. No mistakes in 1989 for Senna, even though he lost first and second gears later in the race

2. Senna's first F1 street race was for Toleman at Monaco in 1984 in heavy rain; he finished second

3. The following year, Senna was driving for Lotus and took pole, only for an engine failure to scupper his race on lap 14

4. Fans in 1989 were not to be disappointed. Senna dominated and finished 52sec ahead of Prost



The speaker is Steve Nichols, former McLaren designer and Ayrton Senna's race engineer in 1988 and 1989. He is talking about the first of those seasons, the Brazilian's introduction to the team, when he outqualified Alain Prost's sister car by 1.4sec - and the latter was hardly a slouch.

Senna had scored his first Monaco victory the previous year with Lotus but his love affair with the track began in 1984. He hadn't raced there in the junior categories, so cut his teeth in a Toleman TG184 designed by Rory Byrne and Pat Symonds. "He got to grips with the circuit quickly," Symonds says, "but I always feel good drivers don't really need to learn new tracks because that comes naturally. The learning part is really just finding that final half a per cent - the rest of it is built into them. That said, Monaco is one of the harder places to work out, not because it's a particularly difficult track but because the process usually involves slightly overstepping the mark and then coming back a bit - and Monaco traditionally punishes those who overstep the mark.

"Ayrton was on it pretty much straight away. We had a good car by then and this was the first race for the electronic fuel injection on the Hart engine. It couldn't have come at a better time because it improved the engine response no end, which was particularly worthwhile around Monaco. He was bloody good, though, in the way he handled a turbo, because in those days they had pretty terrible throttle lag - particularly on our car, with a big single turbo as opposed to the V6s with two small turbos. But he was very good at judging the lag, allowing for it and anticipating. For him, the learning process was more about working how to use the uprated engine than it was about braking points."

With 27 cars trying to qualify for a spot on a grid then limited to 20, Senna lined up 13th before making stellar progress in rain that caused the start to be delayed by 45 minutes.

"We'd started the year on Pirellis," Symonds says, "but then switched to Michelin. When they agreed to supply us, it required the approval of all the other Michelin teams but Ron Dennis said yes only on condition that we

ran tyres that were one specification old. I'm not sure why he was bothered about little old Toleman, but there was only one wet compound so for once we were on the same tyres as the other Michelin runners - and it was the first time we'd actually used them."

Senna was closing fast on Alain Prost's leading McLaren when the red flag was shown after 31 of the scheduled 76 laps, with his advantage cut to just under 7.5sec. Would Senna have won had the race have gone full distance? Might Stefan Bellof have caught and passed both in his nimble, torquey Cosworth-powered Tyrrell? "We can't be sure that Ayrton would have finished," Symonds says. "Afterwards we

**"There was
a sense
of disbelief
when the time
was posted"**

found that his car had a cracked rocker. It might have lasted a full distance like that, wet or dry, but it might not. We'll never know.

"Drivers like Ayrton are pretty exceptional, but they all need to have a degree of self-esteem. Time and again I have seen a good result reinforce that self-esteem, and even though Ayrton was tremendously confident, that result in Monaco ticked a box for him, confirmed to him that he was as good as he believed."

To most, the truth of that was already apparent. In 1985 he led comfortably from pole until his engine blew, possibly a consequence of having over-revved it slightly during the morning warm-up. He started and finished third the following year, beaten by the McLarens of Prost and Keke Rosberg, then scored the first of his record six victories in '87, inheriting the

lead after Nigel Mansell's Williams lost turbo pressure. And then he set 'that' qualifying time.

On the other side of the McLaren garage, Neil Oatley was engineering Prost's car. "I remember there being a sense of disbelief when the time was posted," he says, "and you have to remember just how good Alain was around Monaco. Ayrton was 1.1sec quicker the following year, too, but people always focus on that 1988 lap. He had that place absolutely pegged. The really great drivers perform at an exceptional level while having an intangible ability to make their competitors perform worse. A lap time like that just took the wind from everybody else's sails.

"I engineered him in 1990 and that was another great drive. His technique was to try and imagine a qualifying lap before he went out, which is something he did everywhere, but that's perhaps more relevant in Monaco. The level of skill needed to set a quick time is the same at every track, but at Monaco it is perhaps overlaid with a heightened sense of bravery that exaggerates any differences between drivers."

Nichols: "Our set-up sheets had blank spaces for absolutely everything - castor, camber, spring rates, bump rubbers, ride heights and so forth. With some drivers you could fill parts of it in advance because you knew they wouldn't want to change this or that. With Senna you couldn't fill in anything, but had to consider every last detail and how it might affect the car in every corner - and every phase of every corner. That took a long time. Sometimes you'd go through all of it and he wouldn't change anything, but you still had to discuss it. It was the same in Monaco in 1988. Even though he was so much faster, he still wanted to check the whole list to see if there was any chance of even a tiny improvement."

Ironically, it would be the only time between 1987 and 1993 that he *didn't* win the Monaco GP, a tiny mistake flicking him off at Portier with the race all but won.

His record tally will stand for some time. Among the active drivers, Lewis Hamilton is closest to Senna - three victories in arrears. **●**

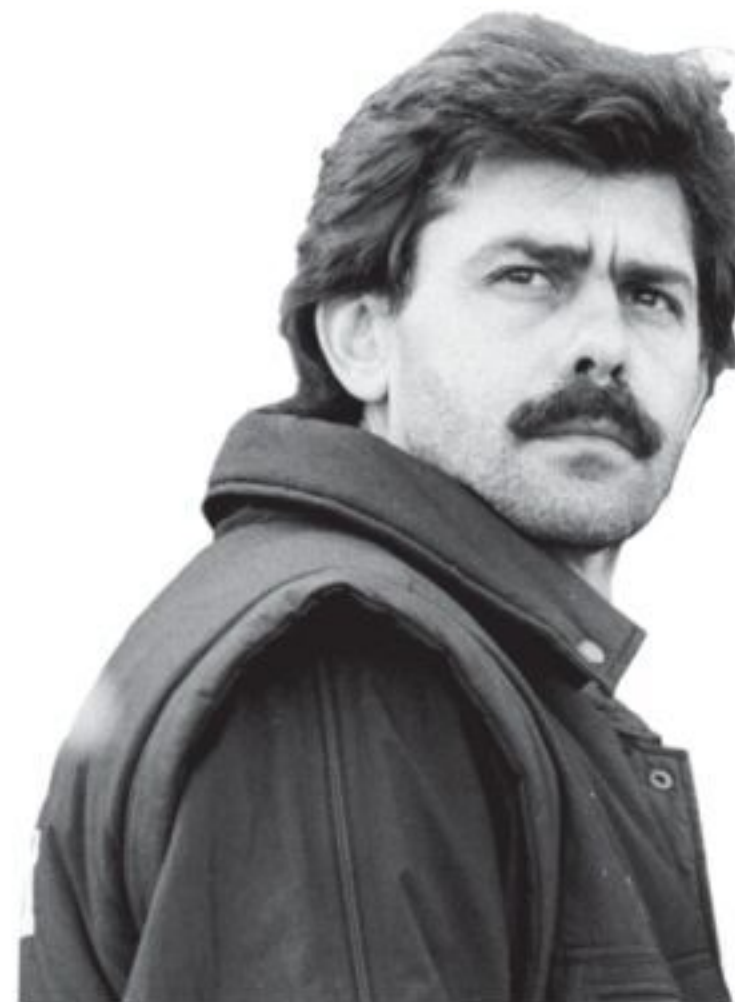
Street fighters



Sir Jackie Stewart

THREE MONACO VICTORIES

"Monaco is about mind management. You mustn't get wound up and overdrive it. These days they can run over the kerbs, take more liberties. In my day if you did that you'd break the suspension. Jim Clark never won it because the Lotus was too fragile. Part of what makes Monaco so special is the proximity of the spectators. They are so close to the cars, unlike anywhere else. The grand prix is Formula 1's jewel in the crown and if I hadn't won it there would be something sadly missing from my career. Standing on the podium in the principality is a very special moment."



Gordon Murray

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR BRABHAM & McLAREN

"The Brabham BT44 was the perfect Monaco car, much smaller and narrower than any other F1 car, short wheelbase, bang on the weight limit, and very agile. On the BT44 and BT42 the nose sloped down, the drivers couldn't see the front, so we made two balsa wood sticks, painted them day-glo orange, and stuck them on the front corners of the nose so the drivers could place the car. We had to modify the steering racks on the Brabham-Alfa Romeo because when the drivers got around to the Loews hairpin they didn't have enough lock to get round it. Monaco is a nightmare because, if you set it up perfectly for the slow stuff, it's going to wallow all over the place in the quick stuff like the tunnel and into Casino Square. So it's always a compromise."



Otmar Szafnauer

ASTON MARTIN F1 TEAM PRINCIPAL

"You don't always need the quickest car, though it helps, because the driver can make a real difference. There's none of this worrying about track limits. If you don't respect them in Monaco you don't finish the race. For the team, the logistics are a big hassle, working conditions are pretty bad, but it's a great spectacle and we should always race there. As a fan I'll never forget watching Senna's pole laps, he was so quick round there, so precise. Right now I'm just elated and proud to be part of bringing Aston Martin back to the grid."



Emerson Fittipaldi

WORLD CHAMPION 1972 & 1974

"Of course, Monaco was one I always wanted to win, like all the F1 drivers, and I came very close. The Lotus 72 was never the best car round there but in 1973 my great friend Jackie Stewart beat me by a second and in '75 I was on the podium again, this time second to Niki Lauda. It's a long race, a lot of work in the cockpit in those days with so many gear changes every lap, and in '71, I did the whole race without a clutch... and still finished fifth. It's a special race, for sure. Everybody is there, it's quite intense."



Derek Bell

MONACO F3 PODIUM IN 1967

"Three years after my first ever race, in a Lotus 7, I was on the podium in Monaco, a dream come true. The track was a great challenge, you had to be so precise, and it's a place where the best drivers can make a difference. One mistake and you're in the Armco, there's nowhere else to go. I stood on the podium in 1967, coming third in the F3 race in the Felday Brabham. That was a great moment. There was room to overtake in an F3 car but the works Matras were too fast for us."

Part of the 'triple crown', Monaco is the grand prix they all want to win. Here, drivers and chiefs share their experiences with **Rob Widdows**



Jo Ramirez

**McLAREN F1 TEAM
CO-ORDINATOR
1984-2001**

"There's a lot of pressure on the team. All the sponsors come to Monaco, and it's a place where if the driver loses concentration he's going to crash. Car set-up is very important, the streets are quite bumpy and the steering has to be geared perfectly for the tight corners. When Ayrton crashed while leading in '88 he was crying when I called him after the race. I think he'd been distracted by Prost chasing him. He was obsessed about beating Prost, but there were only 12 laps to go and he needn't have worried. A quick lap in qualifying is one thing but to keep that up for such a long race, only a very few can do that."



Jochen Mass

**RACED AT MONACO FOR
McLAREN & ARROWS**

"The harder you try, the slower you go. Once you've learnt Monaco, you drive it instinctively, you feel where to put the car, feel how close you are to the guardrail. In my day it was possible to overtake. The cars were smaller, you just needed to pick the place to go off line and get it done. I loved the old chicane; it was faster, you could power slide out of there. It's absolutely one of my favourite circuits and I really loved racing in Monaco. It's so much more fun than some of the sterile new circuits."



Tiff Needell

ENSIGN-COSWORTH 1980

"The highlight of my weekend with the Ensign in 1980 was managing to qualify in the rain on the Thursday. I was very proud of that, but we didn't make the grid on the dry Saturday. I blame Carlos Reutemann... I kept coming across him crawling along at the swimming pool and then weaving around all the way to Rascasse. Then he'd disappear again on a fast lap. Anyway, just to drive an F1 car round Monaco was a joy. Up the hill from Sainte-Dévote and into Casino Square is fantastic. It's a track where your brain needs to be ahead of your body. That's why Senna and Prost were so good there."



Martin Brundle

**SECOND-PLACE FINISH
AT MONACO IN 1994**

"As a driver I adored it. I got one of my best results there in 1994, when I finished second for McLaren, and was running third for Brabham in 1989 when the battery lost charge and I slipped to sixth... I loved street circuits in general and Monaco in particular. The most nervous moment of the season was probably going out to qualify around there, because you knew the balance of your weekend was about to be enhanced or wrecked because of the importance of a grid position. If you qualified badly or whacked a wall, you might as well have gone home. Now, the highlight of my season is trackside in Monaco, watching cars through the first part of the swimming-pool complex - absolutely awesome."



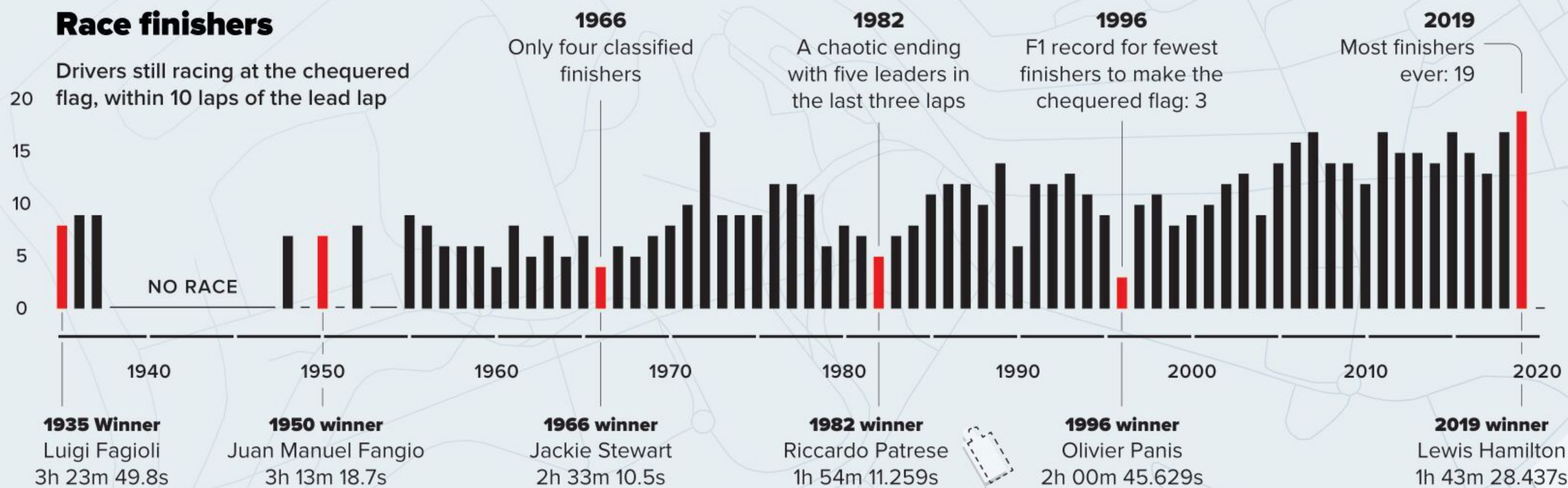
Kevin Magnussen

**McLAREN, RENAULT &
HAAS 2014-2020**

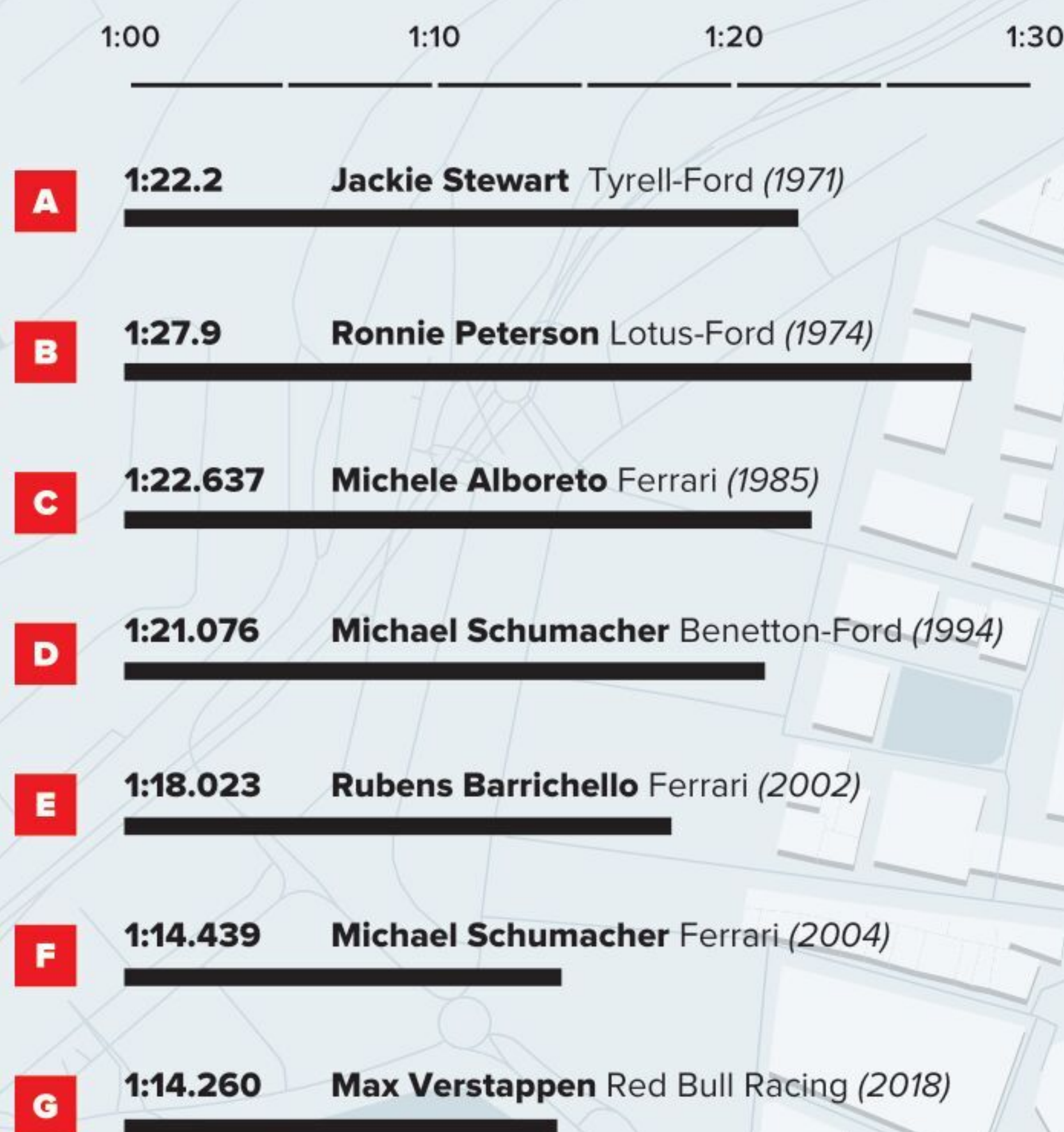
"It is such a cool track. You feel closer to the limit because of the barriers, but the best drivers feel comfortable on the limit, or close to it. To have won at Monaco would have been a dream but at Haas we were fighting for points. It's one of the best circuits we go to and over the years all the great drivers have done well there. I liked it, a proper racing driver's circuit, one of the best."

Race finishers

Drivers still racing at the chequered flag, within 10 laps of the lead lap



Fastest race lap by track version



Fastest ever lap



Track versions

- A** 1929–1972
Original circuit
- B** 1973–1975
Swimming pool added
- C** 1976–1985
Smaller, faster Chicane du Port
- D** 1986–1996
Nouvelle chicane added
- E** 1997–2002
Swimming pool entry modified
- F** 2003–2014
Tightened chicane at exit of swimming pool
- G** 2015–PRESENT
Tabac slightly moved

Monaco fact file

6 weeks

to construct grandstands and barriers for the weekend

13 miles

of barriers used in total for the Monaco GP, including 0.6 miles of Tecpro barriers

20,000 m²

of fencing used around the circuit

800

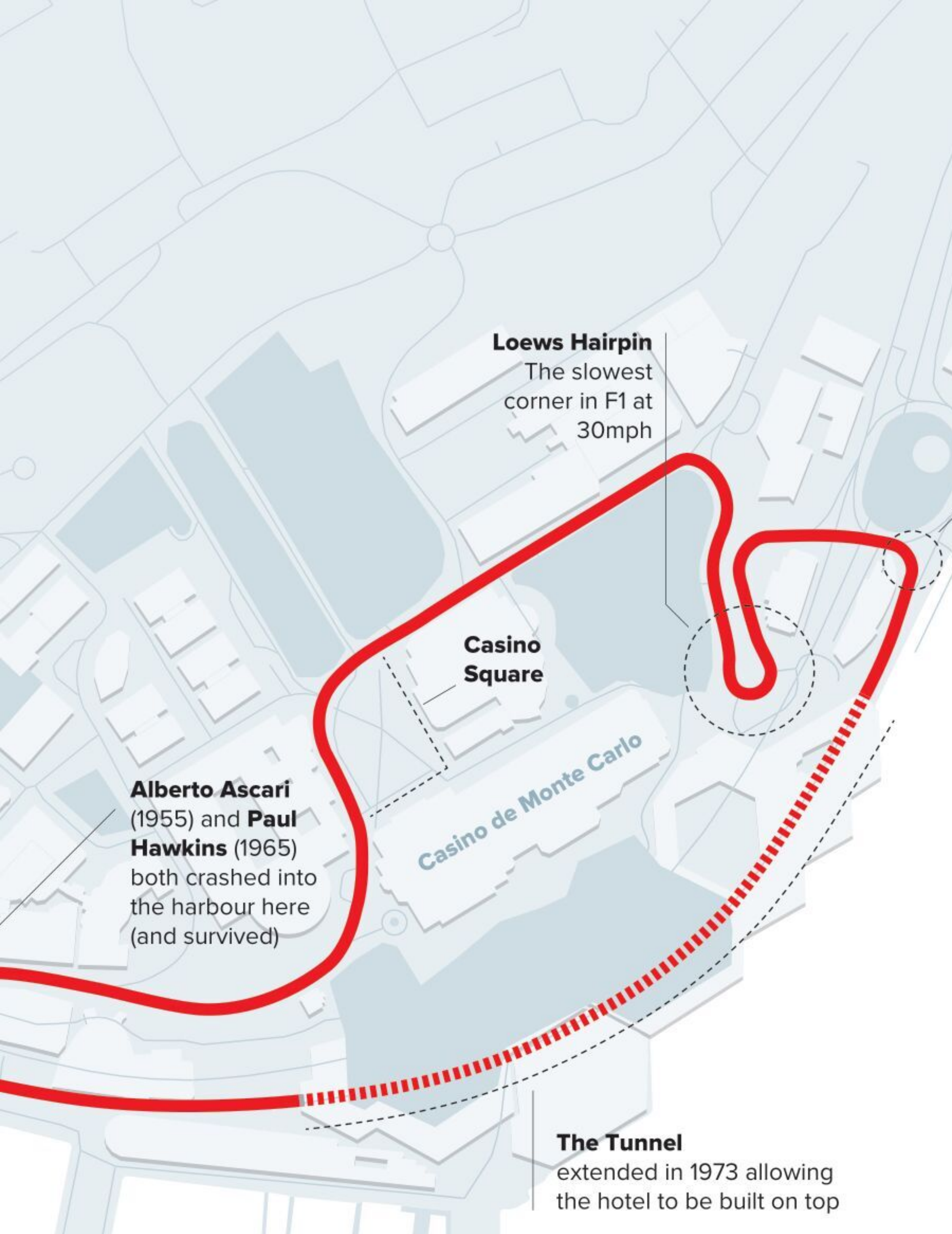
fire extinguishers on site during a race weekend

3 weeks

to take it all back down again

La Rascasse restaurant

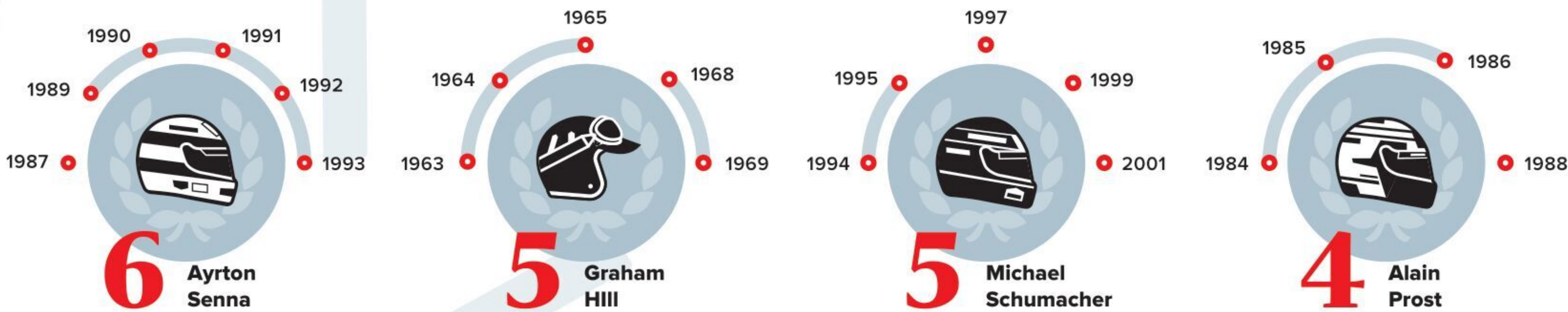
Where Schumacher parked his Ferrari in 2006



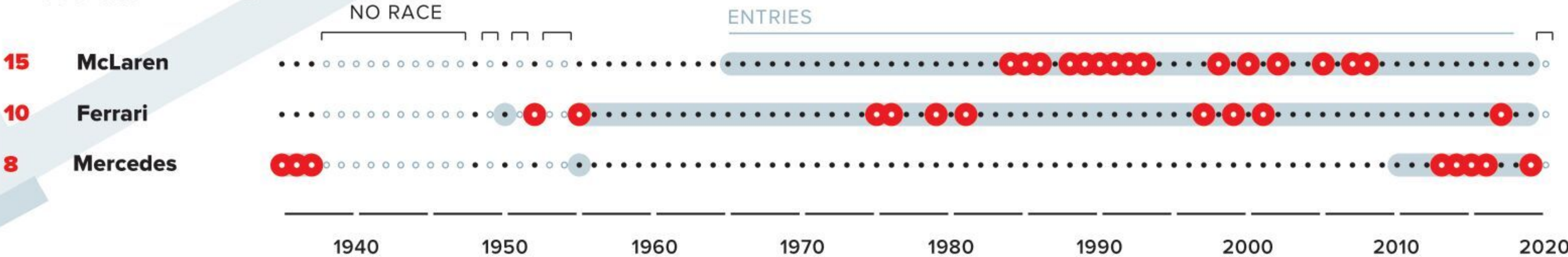
Circuit breakers

All set for the Monaco Grand Prix on May 23?* Go into the race armed with these figures

Most driver wins



Most team wins



Records

MOST PODIUMS

Eight
Ayrton Senna

MOST FASTEST LAPS

Five
Michael Schumacher

BEST WIN RATIO

60%
Ayrton Senna

BEST AVG. FINISH

3.8
Ayrton Senna

LOWEST START TO WIN

14th
Olivier Panis (1996)

DATA: JAKE WILLIAMS-SMITH. INFOGRAPHICS: MADE FROM DATA
*DATE CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS

1

**April 14
1929**

A landmark day in motor racing history, as the first Monaco Grand Prix took place on a course slightly shorter than the one we know today, though much of the layout hasn't really altered. Englishman William Grover-Williams, racing simply as 'Williams', fought off an early challenge from Rudolf Caracciola's Mercedes SSK and led for most of the 100 laps. His Bugatti T35B crossed the line more than a minute ahead of Georges Bouriano's T35C, with Caracciola having slipped to third.



2

April 19 1931

Alfa Romeo withdrew in the wake of a tyre row (it was contracted to Pirelli, but wanted to run on Dunlops), but there were strong entries from Maserati and Bugatti. The latter's T51s were favourites, but with grids still being drawn by ballot, Achille Varzi and Louis Chiron, *above*, started on row four. Varzi worked his way to the front, but a broken wheel handed the initiative to Chiron. He led thereafter and became the first and only Monégasque to win a home race.

5

**June 2
1952**

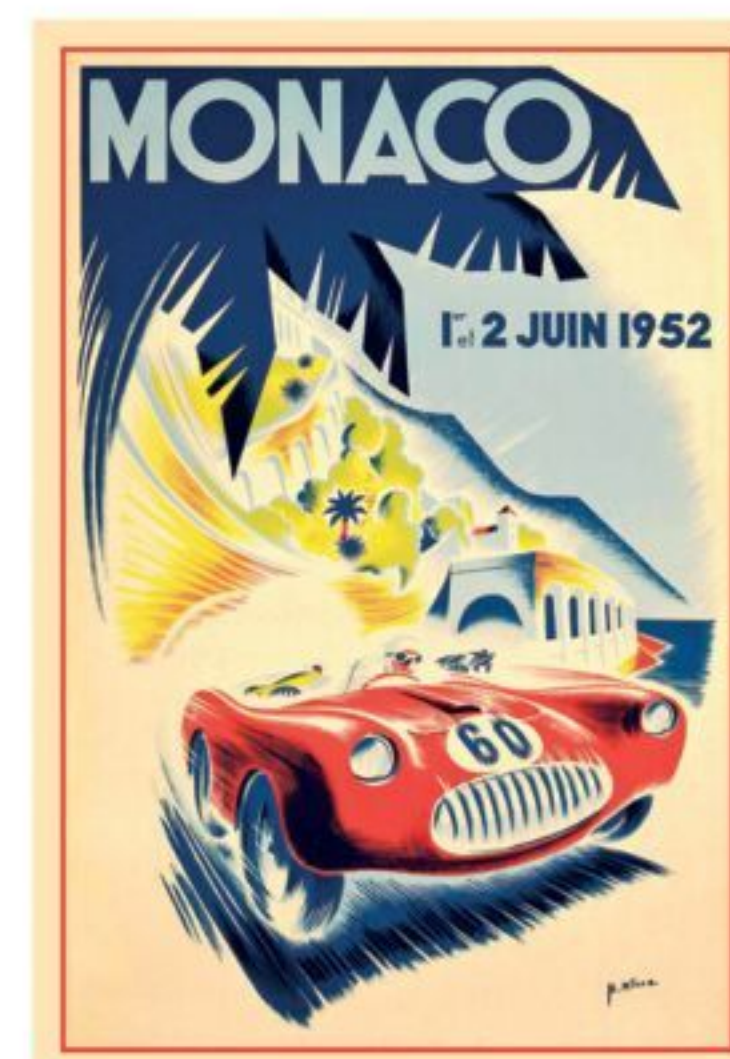
Ferrari's maiden Monaco GP victory was scored not by a grand prix car, but by a 225 S. Absent from the World Championship from 1951-54, the event took place once during that time – and, uniquely, catered for sports cars. Stirling Moss led in his Jaguar C-type but ceded to Robert Manzon's Gordini before a multiple collision claimed both. Vittorio Marzotto went on to head a Ferrari 1-2-3-4-5. The weekend was marred by Luigi Fagioli's serious practice accident; he succumbed to his injuries almost three weeks later.



3

**August 8
1937**

Bernd Rosemeyer's Auto Union having been sidelined by steering failure, the Mercedes W125s of Rudolf Caracciola and Manfred von Brauchitsch dominated. They fought until a lengthy stop delayed the former, but a jammed front brake cost von Brauchitsch time in the pits. He retained his lead, with Caracciola just behind, and ignored signals to let his team-mate pass. He acquiesced once he knew Caracciola needed to stop for tyres. Team orders are no new invention.



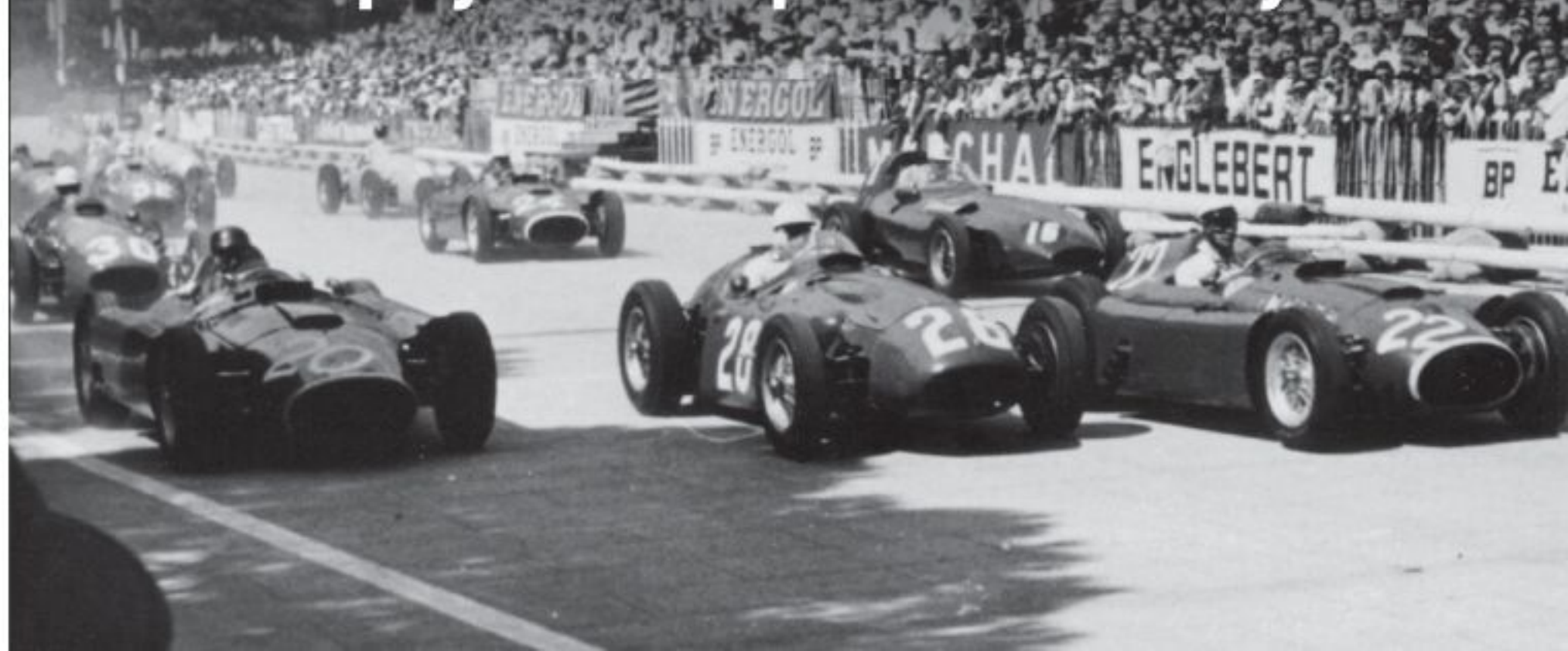
Anything can happen and it usually does

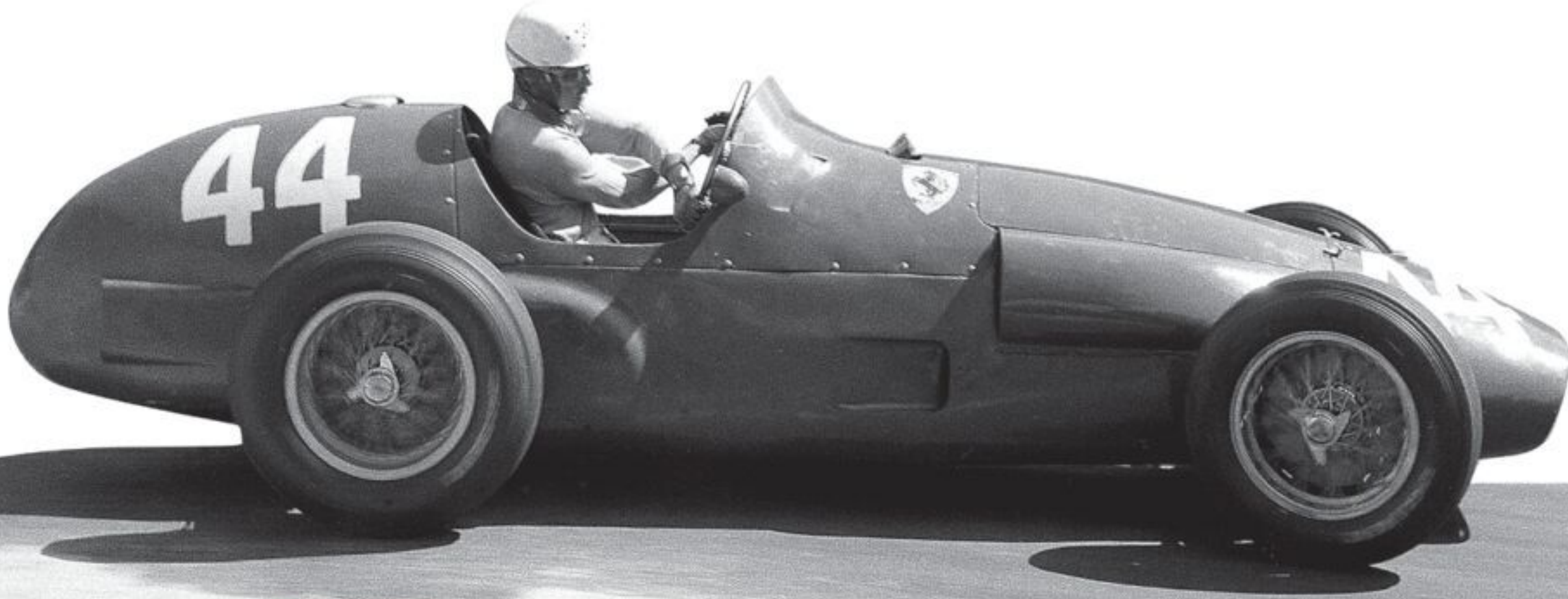
Often chaotic but never short of controversy, the Monaco GP has given us pure motor racing theatre. **Simon Arron** picks 20 seminal days

4

May 21 1950

Eight days after its Silverstone dawn, **the World Championship featured Ferrari for the first time** – though Alfa Romeo's 158 was the car to beat. **Juan Manuel Fangio was clear of a pile-up on the opening lap, but next time around, he noticed the crowd looking in the other direction, rather than at him, and slowed. It played a vital part in his victory.**

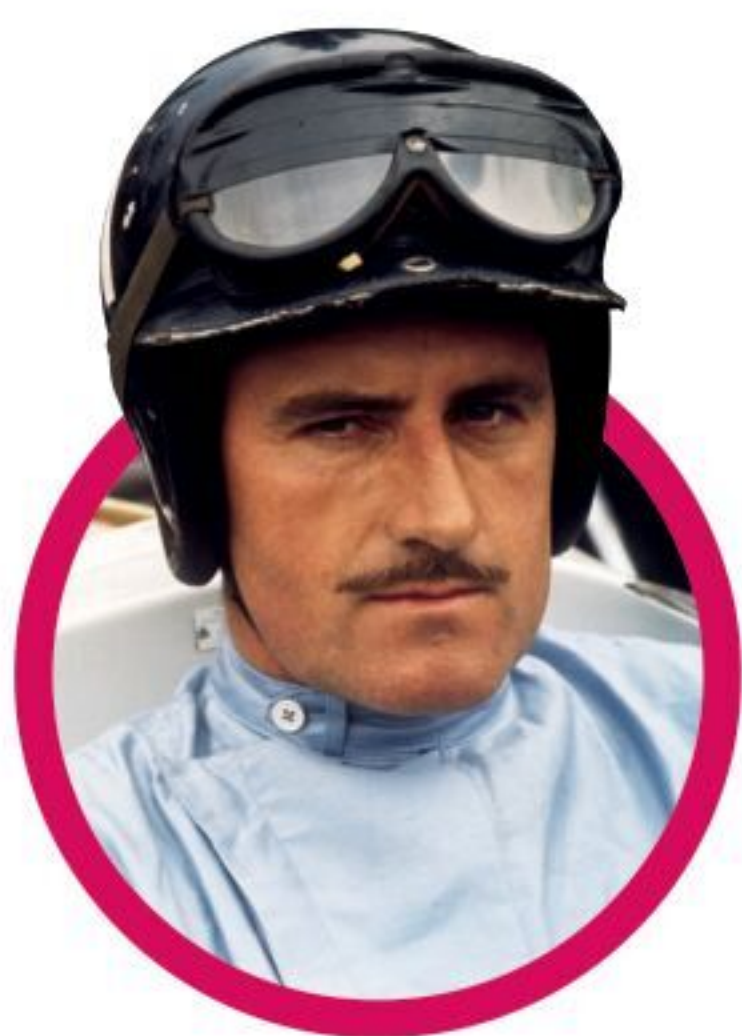




6

May 22 1955

The Mercedes W196s dominated, of course, but transmission failure accounted for Fangio – and Moss' engine blew. Alberto Ascari's Lancia sailed into the lead... but then into the harbour after a mistake at the chicane. The double world champion emerged with cuts and bruises, but died four days later when he crashed a Ferrari 750 during a Monza test. Maurice Trintignant, *above* (Ferrari 625), emerged as the winner; it was a first World Championship success for Englebert tyres.



7

May 30 1965

Having dominated the opening GP of the season in South Africa, Jim Clark and Team Lotus skipped the second because they were away winning the Indy 500. Graham Hill, *above*, scored his third straight victory in the principality, but it wasn't that simple. He dropped to fifth after being forced down an escape road, then pushed his car back onto the track before launching a recovery. Paul Hawkins was the harbour's second visitor after crashing DW Racing's Lotus 33. He swam back to shore.



8

May 10 1970

Jackie Stewart controlled the race until a misfire set in, handing the initiative to Jack Brabham. Jochen Rindt had qualified only eighth in his ageing Lotus 49, but moved up to second thanks to others' misfortunes – and scented victory. With 18 laps to go he was 9sec adrift, but the gap quickly shrank. At the very last corner Brabham locked up and slid wide. Rindt nipped through to win, having completed his final lap in 1m 23.2sec, 0.8sec under Stewart's pole time.



10

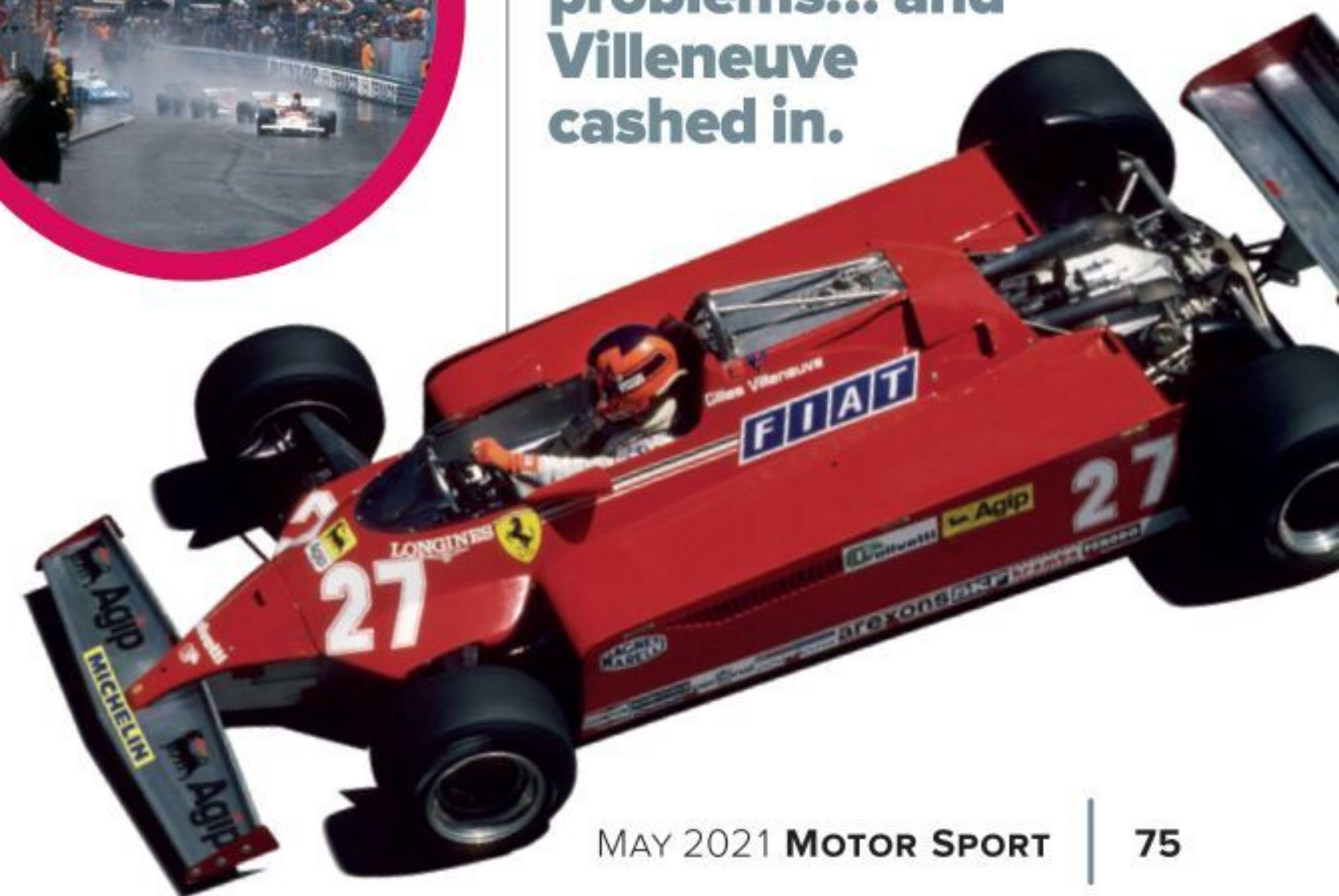
May 31 1981

Gilles Villeneuve was a thinking driver with a delicate touch – and here was a case in point. No mug at the wheel, Didier Pironi qualified his Ferrari 126CK 17th, which was probably about par; Villeneuve, 2.478sec quicker, lined up second. He didn't attempt to race the nimbler DFV-powered cars, but paced himself. Nelson Piquet crashed his Brabham, Alan Jones' Williams suffered fuel-feed problems... and Villeneuve cashed in.

9

May 14 1972

Jean-Pierre Beltoise had yet to score a grand prix victory and his F1 career was approaching its twilight, but for one afternoon the stars aligned. His BRM V12's torque was useful on a treacherously wet surface – and the slow pace meant his withered left arm, the consequence of an accident at Reims in '64, was less of an issue than usual. A banzai start catapulted him into the lead from row two – and he stayed there to score BRM's final F1 success.





May 23 1982

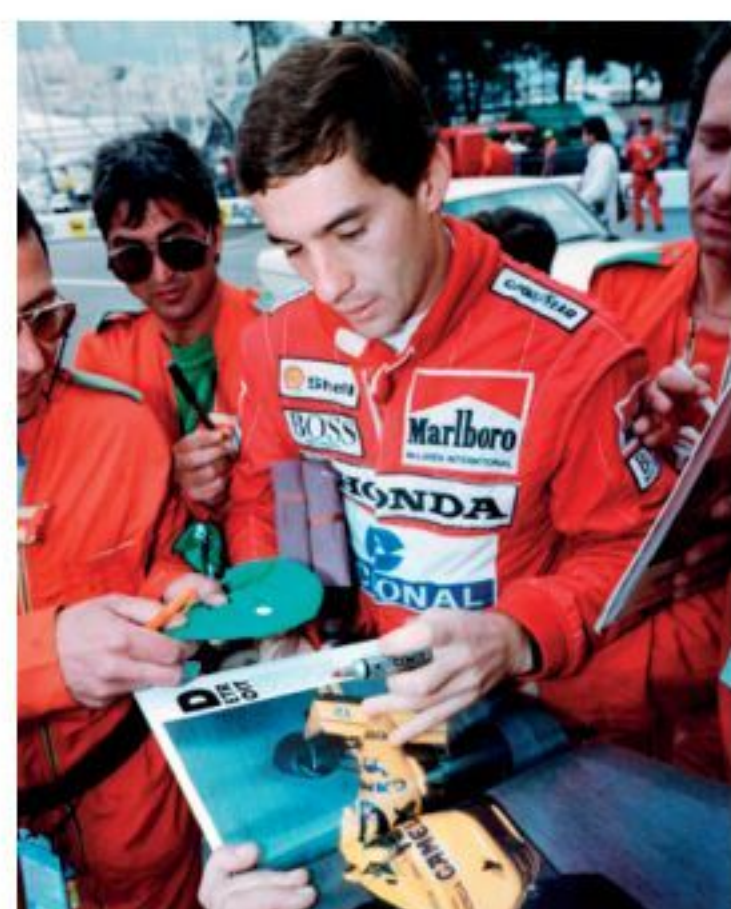
11

René Arnoux started from pole in his Renault, but spun off. Team-mate Alain Prost took charge, then crashed with two laps to go. Advantage Riccardo Patrese, above, who spun and stalled his Brabham. Didier Pironi then took over, but his Ferrari misfired on the last lap. Andrea de Cesaris ran out of fuel before he reached Pironi's stricken car, Derek Daly's gearbox seized... and Patrese came through to win, having rejoined via a downhill bump start.

12

June 3 1984

Alain Prost, below, led away in heavy rain... until passed by the Lotus of fellow front-row starter Nigel Mansell, who headed a grand prix for the first time. The Englishman swiftly pulled clear, but then slid off the road at Massenet. With conditions not improving, and upstart rookies Ayrton Senna and Stefan Bellof catching leader Prost, race director Jacky Ickx decided to throw the red flag. Prost thus won, but the most admiring glances were reserved for his fellow podium finishers.



13

May 14 1988

"On that day, I said to myself, 'That was the maximum for me; no room for anything more.' I never really reached that feeling again." Slightly unsettled by this, Ayrton Senna, above, parked up – but pole was already secure. It wasn't the fastest lap of Monaco – that had been set a year earlier, when the turbo cars were allowed greater boost pressure – but it was 1.4sec quicker than Alain Prost, pole-sitter here just two years earlier.



15

May 31 1992

Nigel Mansell, below, had dominated the opening five races of the campaign – and looked set to triumph again, for a first time in Monaco, after storming away from pole. With eight laps to go, a loose wheel forced a stop and allowed Ayrton Senna to lead. On fresh rubber, Mansell caught the Brazilian and spent the final laps weaving in a bid to unsettle him. Senna calmly placed his McLaren in a position that rendered passing impossible. Game over.



May 15 1988

Given the previous day's events, Senna predictably romped away. As Denis Jenkinson noted in *Motor Sport*, "The Brazilian pulled out an incredible lead. Even when he caught tailenders, they hardly slowed his progress, his remarkable vision and judgement taking him through gaps that rivals looked on with disbelief." On lap 67, however, a slight error pitched him into the rail at Portier. He didn't hang around to watch, but walked home to his flat to reflect. He would win the next five...



14

16

May 19 1996

Michael Schumacher took pole, but lost out at the start and then crashed at Mirabeau Inférieur. Pressure off, Damon Hill built up a huge lead only to retire when his engine blew. Jean Alesi took over until his suspension failed... and Olivier Panis, *below*, came through from 14th on the grid to score his only GP win, and Ligier's last. Panis pulled off some robust manoeuvres, including one to swat aside Eddie Irvine at the hairpin – the kind of thing for which he'd probably be guillotined nowadays.



May 23 2004

Jarno Trulli, above, with Renault team boss Flavio Briatore, had looked a certain future winner after he'd led the 1997 Austrian GP, his last scheduled start for Prost, but it hadn't happened. Having taken pole at Monaco in 2004, his drought looked set to end until a safety car created a potential jumble. Michael Schumacher didn't pit, unlike most front-runners, but tangled with Juan Pablo Montoya while the race was neutralised. Trulli was back in charge; his only GP victory followed.



19

May 24 2008

Felipe Massa's qualifying lap, *above*, as explained by Ferrari race engineer Rob Smedley: "He'd been braking too early for Sainte-Dévote and said he couldn't leave it any later. I grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and said, 'D'you want to let the whole of Brazil down here, because you're letting me down?' He then braked 32 metres later. I'm fairly sure he was trying to prove that he'd end up in the barrier, but then he realised, 'I've got through!' That was it, pole."



20

May 27 2018

Two years earlier, Daniel Ricciardo, above, had dominated the race from the start, only to drop behind Lewis Hamilton after a rare Red Bull pit fumble. This time he led once again, only to lose a significant amount of power at one-third distance when his MGU-k failed. Thereafter he had to manage not only that, but also various side-effects – including overheating rear brakes. Despite the circuit's labyrinthine nature, he didn't put a wheel wrong – a victory that was richly deserved.




18

May 27 2006

Qualifying looked tight between title rivals Fernando Alonso and Michael Schumacher, *above*. Quicker on the opening run, the German was first to take to the track for a second, but didn't complete the lap, clipping the wall at Rascasse and bringing out a yellow flag that denied the rest any chance to improve. Footage showed him steering left despite his intimate knowledge of the circuit... He protested his innocence, but was sent to the back of the grid.



A man, Ben Edwards, is shown in a radio studio. He is wearing a black polo shirt, a watch on his left wrist, and a headset with a microphone. He is shouting into the microphone with his mouth wide open and his right fist raised in the air. He has a red lanyard with a badge around his neck. The background is dark with some studio equipment visible.

*"THE CAR IN FRONT
IS ABSOLUTELY
UNIQUE, EXCEPT
FOR THE ONE
BEHIND IT, WHICH
IS IDENTICAL"*

Murray Walker was a true one-off. Commentator, fan and ambassador for motor racing, he was also a complete professional despite his 'Murrayisms'. Here, fellow commentator **Ben Edwards** remembers the life of his friend and inspiration

At home in the commentary box for the 2001 Japanese Grand Prix – although when it came to local cuisine, Murray preferred Uncle Ben's to sushi rice



M

ONACO GRAND PRIX, 1995 AND A KEY MOMENT in my career as a commentator. Not only was it the first time that I walked the streets and absorbed the sheer complexity of the place, but it was also the first time I shared a commentary box with Murray Walker.

We weren't actually working together; the open-plan style of the booths above the grandstand on the start/finish straight meant we were encapsulated in a large Portakabin with commentators from all over the world separated by short Perspex screens. Murray was teamed up with Jonathan Palmer for the BBC coverage overseen by producer Mark Wilkin while I was sharing the Eurosport TV space with John Watson. It felt so bizarre; to look across and see the man whose every word I had hung onto while falling in love with motor sport and to find myself shouting about the same dramas on track.

The passion for racing that Murray helped ignite in me began with his rants in rallycross. I grew up on a small farm, riding on tractors and occasionally being whizzed around in my brother's grasstrack Ford Anglia. Watching Minis and Escorts battling through the mud at Lydden Hill on the BBC in the early 1970s captured me as each sprint race was wrapped up in Murray's excitement and knowledge. His style was already well honed; he'd been commentating for a quarter of a century by the time I was 10 years old.

He had boosted spectator interest in scrambling and motocross over the previous two decades and now he was helping rallycross achieve a level of popularity on TV that gave him a sense of real pride. He mentioned it in his autobiography: "I like to think that I had a part in its success because, like motocross, my crash-bang-wallop commentary style fitted its all-action happenings perfectly."

'Murrayisms' were also brewing, yet they often came from the challenge of getting information across in double-quick time. One of my all-time favourites, "The car in front is absolutely unique, except for the one behind

it, which is identical" came from those rapid turnarounds. Four cars would prepare for each sprint while the next four would be lined up in preparation for the subsequent race. If a car dropped out of the first group before making it to the start line, it would be replaced by another from the one behind. As Murray called the start and glorified Norwegian racer Martin Schanche's Ford Escort, he suddenly realised that John Welch had joined that grid at the last moment in another Schanche Ford. Hence the wordplay.

His intricate knowledge always mattered more to me than the odd miscue. He communicated snippets of interesting information about cars and drivers that added huge depth to each event and so much of that knowledge came from his connection with people. I saw it in every F1 paddock; he would talk to mechanics, drivers, team bosses and journalists in exactly the same way, soaking up information. He was no different at a touring car event or when doing his research for the Formula Ford Festival.

Part of that ability to connect had come from military service. His loving family and close school friends provided an enjoyable bubble as he grew up but reporting for duty at the 30th Primary Training Wing at Bovington in 1942 gave him a different perspective on life and a real culture shock. He shared a room with an upmarket toff on one side and a streetwise welder on the other. The combination taught him how to connect across all social barriers.

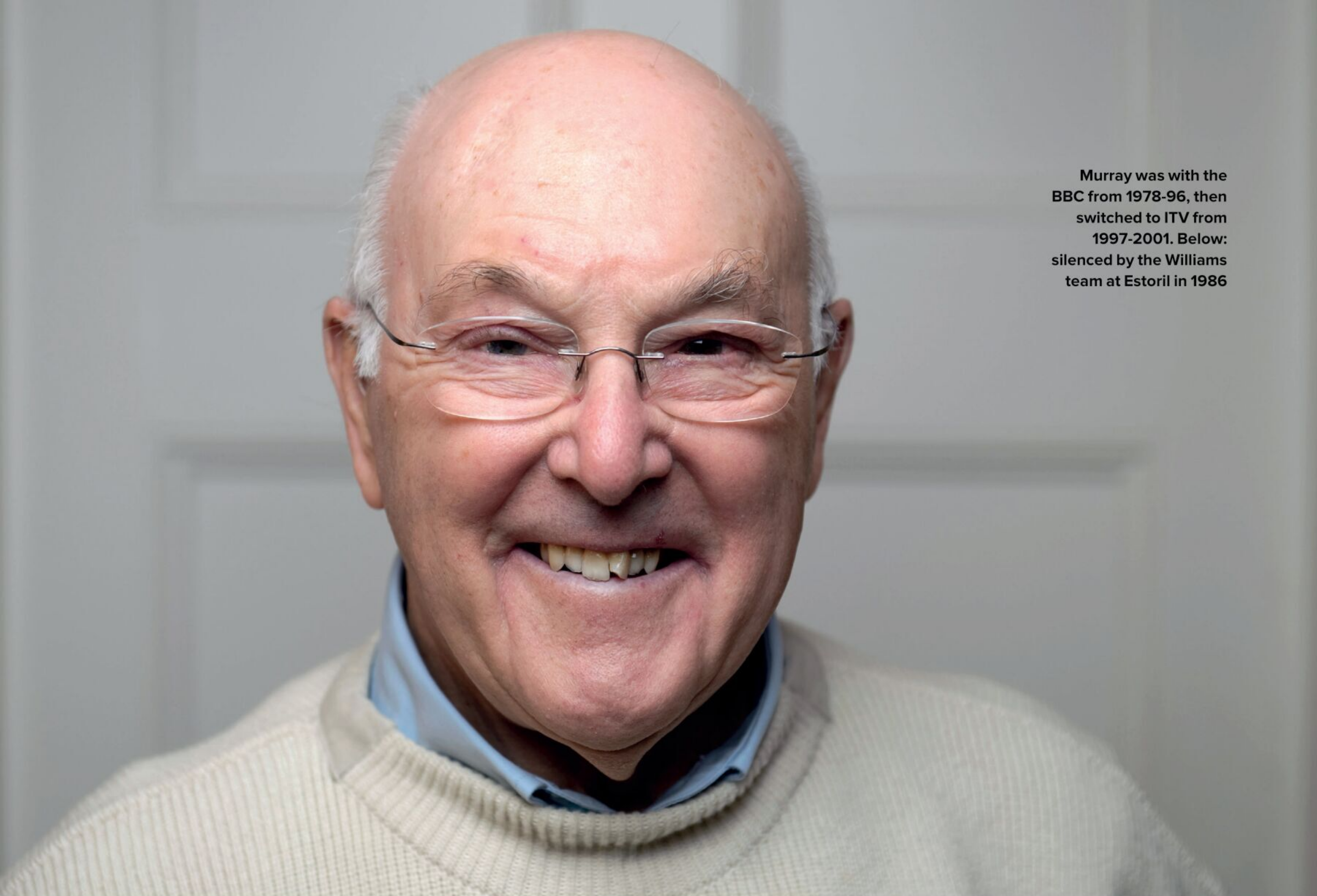
Mark Wilkin, the producer who worked with Murray and later offered me the Formula 1 role with the BBC in 2012, witnessed that style of connection day after day.

"That was the thing that always struck me about Murray," Wilkin says. "When someone met him, and it didn't matter who it was, they always left feeling a little bit richer from the meeting. That could be a taxi driver, a waiter, almost anybody. He appeared to care about you in a way which was incredibly clever."

Murray was the same with me, despite the fact that I was a young ambitious commentator new to the F1 scene. That weekend in Monaco was the first time we saw each other in full flight, but we had already had dinner together as a BBC/Eurosport group at the season opener in Brazil. He was open and friendly, despite the fact that I could be seen as a distant rival. Eurosport's audience numbers were minimal compared to those of the BBC, but the specialist channel had more airtime to play with and could attract some dedicated fans. His warm and welcoming nature was almost universal, except when it came to a certain James Hunt. ●

Ben Edwards was lead commentator for F1 coverage first for the BBC and then Channel 4 before stepping down at the end of the 2020 season. He was inspired by Walker's energetic BBC commentary in the 1970s





Murray was with the BBC from 1978-96, then switched to ITV from 1997-2001. Below: silenced by the Williams team at Estoril in 1986





National treasure at Silverstone for the 2010 British Grand Prix. Left: Murray and James Hunt in 1983; at times, this was a spiky pairing

My interest in F1 developed after James won the world championship in 1976. Two years later the BBC began broadcasting highlights of each race on a Sunday evening with Murray's tones bringing the weekend to a climactic finale. When James joined the BBC team in 1980 his driver's-eye view added a valuable perspective but I was completely oblivious to the fact that their relationship was tricky. Murray felt under threat; most commentaries then were done by a single announcer and he thought James was there to steal his slot. In fact it was the beginning of a new period in broadcasting where sports stars went on to become vital communicators and gradually the tension eased, although it never fully disappeared.

After a decade of working together things could still go wrong. For the grand prix in Adelaide in the early 1990s, James and Murray worked directly with Australian broadcaster Channel 9 on site as well as providing BBC commentary. Mark Wilkin was there to keep an eye on them but they had separate briefings from a feisty local producer who irritated James while Murray was happy to co-operate. One meeting went particularly badly; Mark was at the hotel when he got a call and had to hold the phone away from his ear:

"YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT JAMES DID IN THE MEETING!" Murray bellowed and continued to rant for 20 minutes.

"I told him I would sort it out and rang James," remembers Wilkin, "and he said, 'Well,

you won't believe what Murray did in the meeting,' and off he went for 20 minutes. I said the only way we can sort this out is to have dinner together."

Always one to know the best venues in the area, Wilkin booked a restaurant nearby and prepared to play a diplomatic role.

"It was the most uncomfortable, most unpleasant dinner I've ever had. Both of them refused to back down. Murray absolutely adored Australia and it oozed out of every pore of his commentary what a fabulous place it was. But James hated it, claiming there was no culture."

They still had some aspects in common as both decided to order the same chicken dish. Tension was hanging in the air but before long the waiter appeared, carrying two very generous plates.

"SEE, THAT'S WHAT'S SO MARVELLOUS ABOUT THIS COUNTRY, LOOK AT THIS CHICKEN HANGING OFF BOTH SIDES!" enthused Murray.

"It's typical of this country they've got to have it bigger and better," moaned the moody Hunt. "Isn't that an example of how awful this place is?"

"Murray had an endless ability to laugh at himself"

Thankfully the benefits of good food and drink did calm the situation and Mark's plan allowed the weekend to go ahead as normal. "Eventually we got round to discussing it and saying it's okay to have different opinions and they became friends again."

It was clearly a complicated relationship throughout its duration, one that so sadly came to a premature end in 1993 when James died at the age of 45, but the combination will always be remembered for delivering a fantastic mix. Ironically, my early F1 partner John Watson influenced Murray on one occasion without even knowing it. The commentary booths at Spa in the 1990s were not much bigger than phone boxes. Two people could squeeze in, but Mark's role as commentary producer had to be operated from a separate booth. It was a year or two before John and I worked together and he wasn't commentating that weekend. He asked Mark if he could watch the race from his cabin and he was duly set up with some headphones then focused on the action.

It proved an entertaining time. With Murray's commentary in one ear, John Watson's voice was filling his box with



Murray took the Inspiration Award at our 2017 Hall of Fame evening

observations. “Oh Murray, what a bloody idiot, that’s Prost not Mansell,” shouted Wattie, and then a few moments later, “He’s going to have to come into the pits now.”

Within a breath, Murray was calling, ‘OH, HE’S GOING TO HAVE TO COME INTO THE PITS NOW!’ and Mark presumed they had both been inspired by similar thoughts as the pattern kept repeating.

The truth was slightly different. For some reason, the normal ‘press to talk’ button had remained open: “Unknown to me, Wattie had been audible the whole time into Murray’s ear,” says Mark, “but he hadn’t thought to tell me at some stage that he could hear this strange voice.”

Murray looked a bit baffled but quite happy when he caught up with Mark after the race. “I could hear this voice all the way through the commentary,” he mentioned. “It would say things like, ‘Oh you’re a bloody idiot Murray, what are you talking about?’ and it was really helpful, he told me loads of things.”

Murray was able to compartmentalise anything, make use of it if necessary or simply ignore it while focusing on the action. He also had an endless ability to laugh at himself, especially when surrounded by people. In Australia he would regularly hold a breakfast gathering for fans, respond to questions and comments and have everybody in stitches, with jokes at his own expense. He was an entertainer as well as a commentator but his focus was always razor sharp.

In my first year with the BBC he joined me in the booth at Silverstone for free practice, and this time we really did work together. He was 88 years old and yet he was totally up to speed with the latest stories and momentum in the sport, making accurate observations while telling stories that made us laugh.

Murray had so many elements that lifted him into the highest echelon of sports commentators. His focus, his connection with people and his sheer professionalism came from an energy level that was truly impressive. He would spend seven hours working through notes on BTCC highlights before delivering his 30-minute commentary, and often travel straight off to a grand prix that night or the next day. Listening to him carry the excitement of Steve Soper smacking into John Cleland at Silverstone or dealing with the tragedy of Ayrton Senna’s accident at Imola, every moment that he covered was handled with genuine emotion and that struck a chord with me. He was both an inspiration and the standard bearer for all motor sport commentators in his wake. But ultimately for me, the key to his brilliance was his enthusiasm. It was genuine and heartfelt, unblemished by the political sandpits that Formula 1 is often drawn into. His sheer passion for motor sport and for living life to the full generated a long and remarkable career. And it wasn’t just engines that provided that energy.

“At one time in the Formula 1 paddock Honda provided the finest hospitality,” recalls

Wilkin. “An invitation to lunch came once a year and was well worth it.”

They were at Spa and took their seats along with other guests while a fantastic Japanese chef conjured up superb cuisine. Murray got up to help himself but as soon as he tried to put some classic Japanese rice on his plate, his voice resounded through the room.

“Where’s the chef, where’s the chef?” Murray called out.

“This chap is brought out,” says Mark, “and Murray in a typical Englishman-talking-to-a-foreigner voice goes, ‘I CAN TELL YOU... I CAN TELL YOU HOW TO MAKE RICE THAT DOESN’T STICK TOGETHER. UNCLE BEN’S. WHAT YOU NEED IS UNCLE BEN’S NON-STICK-TOGETHER RICE. I CAN GET SOME RICE FOR YOU,’ and everybody’s cringing and mumbling, ‘Murray, Murray,’ but he gets all the way through to the end of it. Brilliant. It was just him being enthusiastic.”

Walter Chrysler founded the Chrysler Corporation just two years after Murray was born in the early 1920s. In addition to creating a hugely successful car company, Walter also delivered wise words: “The real secret of success is enthusiasm,” he once said. “Yes, more than enthusiasm, I would say excitement. I like to see men get excited. When they get excited they make a success of their lives.”

Enthusiasm and excitement defined Murray Walker and carried him through what would ultimately be a wonderfully successful life. ●



Kremer's denim-clad *GIANT KILLER*

After its domination with prototypes such as the 908 and 917, Porsche found itself in need of a new saviour on track in the mid-1970s. Its salvation arrived in the form of the 911 RSR.

Andrew Frankel tries one of the finest of the breed

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAYSON FONG



SOME ARE OLDER, MANY ARE FASTER, but if you were to ask me to name the greatest version of the world's greatest sports car, I would name this car, the 3-litre version of the Porsche 911 RSR.

Why? Because it is the ultimate naturally aspirated 911 based on the original 911 design. It represented the final point on its journey as a racing car before the purity of its design had to be compromised to go any faster. In this case, compromised by a turbocharger.

It is true that forced induction provided the RSR with a whole new lease of life, and also spawned cars that would pass into racing legend - the Le Mans-winning 935 among them - but while these brutal machines were quicker over a lap, were they ever as good to drive? When I asked Britain's foremost 911 racer Nick Faure to name his favourite Porsche he was quick to reply: "Oh, it's the RSR, no doubt about that. The most beautiful car to drive, so much easier to balance than the later turbo cars. You could do anything in an RSR." And he did, including in 1975 helping drive a private RSR from 30th on the grid at Le Mans to sixth at the flag, beaten only by one other RSR and four prototypes.

To give you an idea of how successful the RSRs were in period, they filled the first five

places in the GT category in that Le Mans race. At the Daytona 24 Hours that same year where prototypes were not eligible to race, of the top nine finishers just one was not an RSR, and that came seventh. In the seven rounds of the World Sports Car Championship in which any GT car finished, RSRs won six. The year before they won their class everywhere but at Le Mans. And what's astonishing is these achievements came against more powerful cars, be it a 4.4-litre Ferrari Daytona whose engine had twice the number of cylinders and camshafts and almost 50 per cent more capacity, or monster 7-litre Corvettes. In the mid 1970s if you wanted to succeed in GT racing, you needed an RSR.

There's another reason RSRs are ineffably cool and it actually also goes a long way to explaining why they were so competitive. It wasn't the first 911 designed for racing - that was the original 911R of 1967 - but it was the first time a 911 had assumed the mantle of Porsche's flagship racing model, rather than as understudy to a prototype like a 908 or 917.

Like Porsche's two greatest racers, the 917 and 956/962, the RSR owed its very existence to a change in the rules. At the end of 1971 and with the 917 now as fast as F1 machinery at certain circuits, a 3-litre limit was imposed on prototypes, on the assumption that dropping

"In the 1970s if you wanted to succeed in GT racing, you needed an RSR"



PORSCHE 911 RSR

After some initial chassis confusion, stemming from an accident and subsequent repair in period, this RSR is now back to almost full originality. Being sold race-ready, it has a sprinkling of more modern components to ensure reliability, but it is supplied with all its period parts present and correct







“There was no real unfair advantage, it just had no weakness”

Left, clockwise from top: The interior is unmistakably 911, and even though the tachometer reads up to 10,000rpm, the font is the same as any road-going car of the period; Wally's Jeans is one of the more distinctive RSR designs; the full 3-litre engine capacity was achieved after a change in crankcase materials; huge rear track and wide Michelin tyres provide massive amounts of traction

their power by the best part of 200bhp would slow them down. Which it did, for about a year. But by 1973 the lap time of the pole-sitting 3-litre Ferrari 312PB at Spa was over three seconds faster than that of the 5-litre 917K in 1971.

But it was not a game Porsche could play. Its 3-litre 908 had won the WSC in 1969 with little help from the then-new, unproven and frankly dangerous 917, but while still quick enough at venues that placed handling above power, over the course of a season it stood no chance against Ferraris that were basically F1 cars with enclosed bodywork. The Porsche's flat-eight motor dated back to an early 1960s design and air cooling mandating just two valves per cylinder. It could never make close to the power of the purpose-built Ferrari. To make the point, the 1972 season had 11 rounds, of which Ferrari won 10 and didn't enter the 11th, leaving Le Mans to the Matras.

But Porsche was not yet ready to withdraw. Famously the 917 was repurposed as a Can-Am car, leaving the 911 as its only other product in conventional sports car racing.

That presented an opportunity. By 1973 the 911 was already a 10-year-old car, and in that time had only grown a slightly bigger engine and an elongated wheelbase. Something was needed to sprinkle stardust on an ageing product. Porsche saw an opportunity in Group 4 racing - a forerunner of today's GT category - to prove it still had what it took on the track, and to do it in a car it could actually sell not by the handful, but the truckload.

And the 2.7 Carrera RS was part of that plan, with 500 road cars required to homologate its racing derivative, which was the RSR. Having been designed as a 2-litre, at first the engine would only stretch to 2.8, and that's how the early RSRs raced. Only when the crankcase

material was changed from magnesium to heavier but stronger aluminium could Porsche widen the bores enough to permit the full 3-litre capacity without compromising reliability.

In this form, at least before turbos came along, the RSR was formidable. Its success wasn't due to any particular 'unfair advantage', but the absence of any weakness in its dynamic composition. With a gutted interior and plastic panels it weighed just over 900kg. With slide throttle, twin-spark ignition, hot cams and megaphone exhausts, power was around 350bhp. A braking system carried over almost unchanged from the 917 ensured it would lose speed even more rapidly than it gained it, while its massive rear track and engine located over the back wheels meant it could cannon out of the corners and carry all that extra speed.

Perhaps cleverest of all was using steel or titanium coils in the suspension instead of the standard torsion bars, which were unable to provide the requisite level of stiffness. It was clever because by mandating that the original springing medium be retained, the regulations appeared to rule out the change. But Porsche just left the torsion bars in and made the coils so stiff the bars were made redundant. The rules said the old springs had to be there; they did not say they had to have a meaningful function...

Finally, the cars were almost indestructible. As Mark Donohue - who in 1974 would become the inaugural champion of the IROC series in an RSR - said: "The car couldn't be broken. They're so strong and so well engineered that there isn't much a driver can destroy but the gearbox. The Carrera [RSR] is the best off-the-shelf production race car available."

And this is one of the very last, supplied to race in the 1975 DRM (forerunner of the DTM) and German GT championships. Unusually

it wasn't built by Porsche but supplied in component form to the Kremer brothers, whose K3 version of the 935 would win Le Mans outright in 1979, the first time the race had been won by something derived from a production road car since before the war. Kremer ran the car for Dutchman Cees Siewertsen, scoring a couple of wins in the 1975 German GT series.

The car had a rather chequered existence thereafter. It seems its tub got damaged, and the car was rebuilt around a replacement. But the original was not destroyed but repaired, a new car built up around it and used for ice racing in Iceland. After that it went to the US while in 2003 the car with the replacement tub was sent to Roitmayer in Munich for a ground-up restoration. It was during research for this project that the existence of the original tub was discovered, purchased, completely restored by Freisinger Motorsport and then reunited with the rest of the car in its original Wallys Jeans livery while the replacement tub was destroyed to avoid later confusion. It is being sold by Bell Sport & Classic for over £1m in ready to race form.

Which is nice. So often these cars are museum pieces, lovely, but in need of gentle treatment for tests like this. This RSR is not like that: while it retains its original slides, trumpets and mechanical fuel injection, the engine itself - while to correct RSR spec - has been built around a later, stronger 930 Turbo block to preserve the original unit, which will be sold with the car. Likewise common sense items like electronic ignition are used, with the original system supplied as a spare. The car is running slightly silenced exhausts because, according to Bell Sport's Peter Smith, the original pipes are "completely nuts". I'm slightly disappointed until I hear it, its bark more than loud enough.

Driving this, versions of which won not just the Daytona 24 Hours, but the Sebring 12 Hours


and the last world championship Targa Florio, is no more difficult than driving a 911 street car.

As Donohue said, all you really need to mind is that truculent 915 gearbox. I've driven so many and am yet to find two alike, so sensitive are they in the way they are built and set up. This one has an occasional reluctance to find third, but as with all of them you just have to be slow and deliberate in operating it.

The engine is another matter. You'd have thought such an old and highly tuned motor might be a peaky nightmare. But despite all the blood-and-thunder noise, it is utterly docile. Tractable from 3000rpm, baying like a wolf at 5000rpm and positively deranged at my self-imposed 7000rpm limit, if there is a more thrilling sounding six-cylinder motor, I've not driven it. For racing you would probably use 8200rpm and there are instances of RSRs surviving wrong-slot forays to the dark side of 9000rpm. They build 'em strong.

Yet for all its mad pace and extreme specification, those coil springs and its race-spec Michelin TB5 tyres, this all-conquering, giant-slaying racer still feels like a 911. If you've driven any classic 911, what would surprise you most about the RSR is how unsurprising it is. The steering has the same unique 911 feel, the nose still bobs about as only 911 noses do. The gearbox feels the same and the pedals, too.

I loved this car. Like today's RSR which you can read more about over the page it is the most extreme derivative of the road car that existed at the time, but unlike the modern RSR-19, you can understand and exploit this one.

This may not be the most famous of RSRs but as a ready to race machine, eligible for events from track to rallies, with a known and documented history complete with all original parts, it has extraordinary appeal. And I've barely mentioned that livery. I'd probably have it for that alone... 

**"For all its mad
pace and
extreme spec,
this giant-killer
feels like a 911"**



SPECIFICATION

PRICE: £POA

(with Bell Sport & Classic)

POWER: 330bhp

TORQUE: 232lb ft

ENGINE: 2996cc naturally
aspirated, SOHC with two
valves per cylinder

GEARBOX: Five-speed manual

WEIGHT: 900kg

MAX SPEED: 179mph



Left: Frankel loved being behind the wheel of the RSR, and revelled in the familiarity of its road-car heritage. Here: Now for sale with Bell Sport & Classic, this RSR would make an ideal entry for most historic contests

A top-down view of a Porsche endurance racing car, number 91, on a racetrack. The car is red and white with black accents. The front and rear body panels, including the front bumper and side fenders, have been removed and are lying on the ground around the car. The car's engine, transmission, and chassis are exposed. The word "PORSCHE" is visible on the front and rear wings. The number "91" is prominently displayed on the front and side. Various sponsor logos, including "TOTAL", "WEC", and "MICHELIN", are visible. The car is parked on a dark asphalt surface with a red and white striped curb.

What lies beneath

Earplugs, balaclava, helmet and sound-absorbent fabric still can't fully hide the din of the RSR-19

The 911 RSR story began in the mid-70s but this is the latest chapter. As **Andrew Frankel** discovers, the '95% new' RSR-19 has little in common with its ancestors

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW FAR REMOVED from even the raciest street-legal Porsche is this 911 RSR-19 - its current Le Mans and World Endurance Championship contender - you don't need to drive it, though I have. You don't even need to pore over its specification, nor crawl all over it, though I did. All you really need to do is ask Porsche's head of WEC operations Alex Stehlig a simple question.

"If I gave you a new road 911 and asked you to turn it into an RSR..." And that's as far as you get before Stehlig looks at you as if you've parted company with your senses. "You couldn't," he says, wide-eyed at the thought.

Try from the other direction. "Okay, could you show me round the car and point out those components that have come from the road car?" Alex pauses, now lost in thought, before he smiles as an answer pops into his head. "Here!" he says pointing to the rear lights.

"So the RSR has the same rear lights as a road 911?"

"The lights? No. Just the plastic covers."

"Anything else?"

Alex walks to the other end of the car and points at the Porsche sticker that passes for a badge on the bonnet. "That," he says. "Maybe."

SO THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE A PORSCHE 911, is powered by a flat-six engine and is made by the same people who make the Porsche 911, I'll leave it to you to decide whether it really is a 911. It doesn't even possess that other unmistakable 911 hallmark: a rear-mounted engine. Because the 911 road car uses a version of the platform also employed by the mid-engined Boxster and Cayman, in 2017 Porsche argued that it should be allowed to turn the engine and gearbox by 180 degrees, creating the first mid-engined 911. Some salivated over the prospect of a mid-engined 911 road car. Three years later, they're still salivating.

But this car, though it is mid-engined, is not that car, the RSR-17. This is the RSR-19, Porsche's current top-line racer, barely a year old and the car that secured pole position at Le Mans before, for reasons still not yet fully understood, its race fell apart. Porsche says

95% of its components are new - not relative to the street 911, but the previous RSR. It is the most evolved and sophisticated road-derived sports racing car ever produced by the most successful manufacturer of sports racing cars.

And yet at first acquaintance, it does not seem that way. Porsche has just dispatched 10 RSRs to customer teams who paid £860,000 for each one, comfortably more than double what it charges for a GT3 category 911. Then again, you can't race a GT3 at Le Mans.

Where is the money going? Sure, its engine has 4.2 litres instead of the 4 litres offered by its closest road relative, the GT3 RS, but with around 515bhp it's got a lower specific output. It could be tuned to provide far more power, but it would be pegged back when Balance of Performance countermeasures were applied. It has a six-speed paddle-shift gearbox, where the road car has seven, and steel brakes in place of its cousin's optional carbon ceramic units.

Once more you find yourself being asked to look at it from the other direction, the Porsche Motorsport direction. There's no need to ask how Porsche defines this car because it's there on the crib sheet they give you: "A single-seat race car for the FIA GTE

category". It's not a 911 adapted for racing, it's a single-seater obliged by regulations and Porsche's marketing it to look like a 911.

Every bit of bodywork you can see is carbon-fibre. The aero package is monstrous, from the huge splitter and gaping mouth at the front to the rear wing and its savage-looking diffuser. It is that diffuser, and not the fact that mid-engined cars are better balanced, that drove the decision to push the motor ahead of the rear axle line. When Ferry and Butzi were configuring the car that would become the 911 in the early 1960s, the future inconvenience of siting the engine where a diffuser should sit would not have delayed their deliberations.

We are at Vallelunga and the first thing that happens is I am invited for a fitting. There is no requirement for the interior to look like a 911, so the pretence is dropped. It's a flightdeck. The only thing I can find that might have come from a 911 is the twiddler for the wing mirrors.

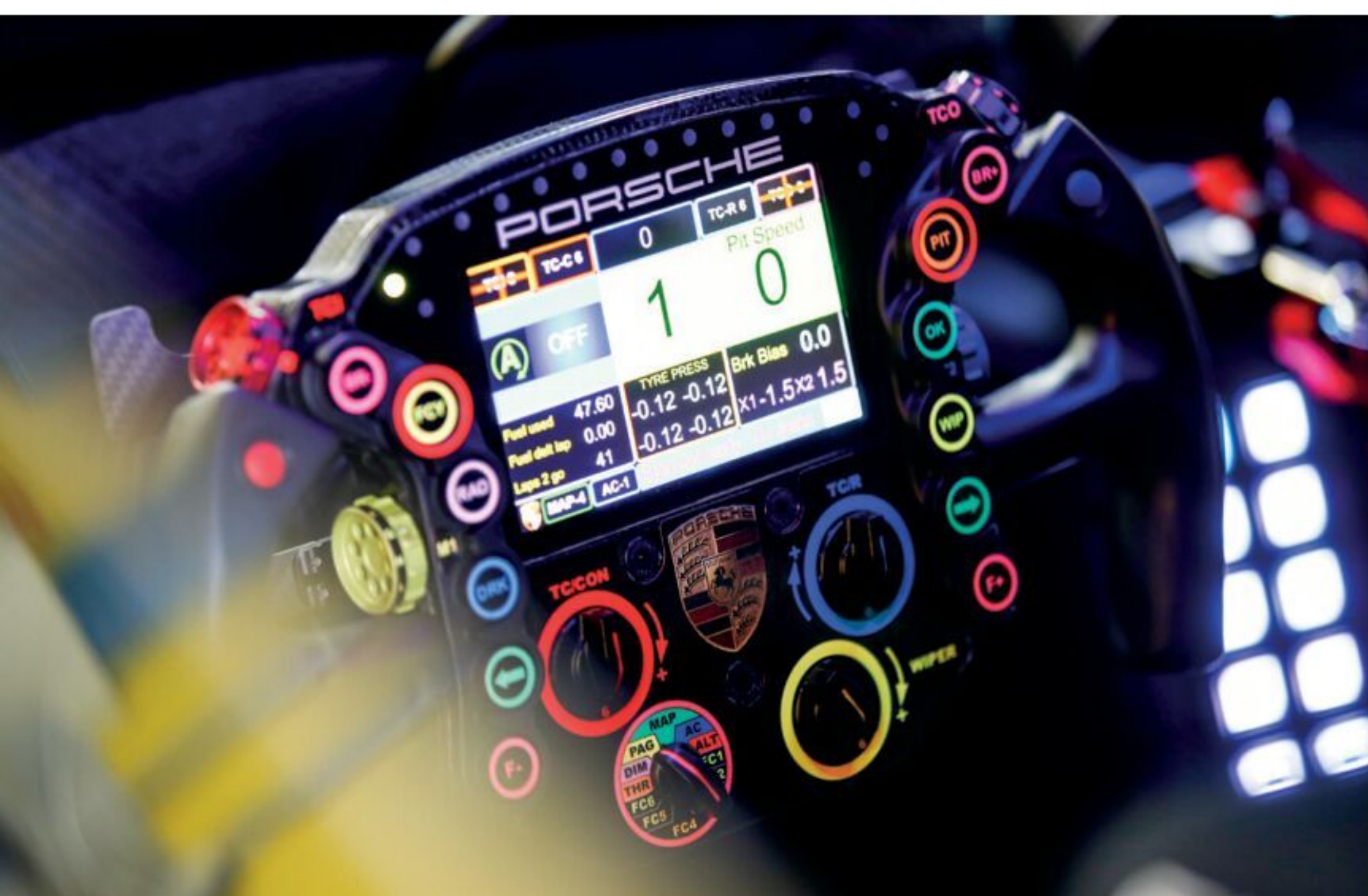
Getting in is undignified for a man of my size and the seat is uncomfortable because it's designed for the slim-hipped Gianmaria Bruni, who took pole at Le Mans in what he tells me is this very car. But you forget all that quickly. The seat is fixed in position and air-conditioned,



The RSR-19 scored a debut 1-2 in its first race at Silverstone in 2019



A few laps in, Frankel was getting the hang of its handling; it's something else



It's a rare delight to have the Porsche WEC squad as your crew. Above: the flightdeck

"Don't be scared to push, the car is fantastic, lots of downforce"

which I've not come across in a racing car before. The pedals slide forward and the steering column has a luxurious range of adjustment. The wheel has a Cosworth central display and data logger and, arranged around it, 30 separate controls which, as Porsche observes, is 30 more than they had a couple of decades back. It's so bewildering I've been provided with an idiot's guide map, pointing out those controls I'm likely to need, which is hardly any. Indicators, pitlane speed limiter, fast start buttons and that's it.

It's about now, when you're settled in the car, waiting for the signal to go, that a small punch up that's been brewing for a while breaks out between your ears. The logical side of your brain has rationalised this. I don't know the circuit well but a couple of laps in a 911 road car didn't reveal many horrors. Simple maths demonstrate the RSR will be rapid in a straight line but unlikely to tear my head off. Truth is I've driven plenty that are faster. And it's even got traction control, which should save me from myself should I tread too hard at the apex and overdose its enormous Michelin slicks. But the other side of my brain is making far more noise. "Just look at the bloody thing," is one

observation. "Have you heard it?" is another. I have, which is why Porsche insists that in addition to earplugs, a balaclava and helmet, they also tape sound-absorbent material over your ears. Which is a first for me.

There's also that other thing that we who track test cars don't much like to talk about. This car is not being run by a mate out the back of a Transit. Today I have the Porsche WEC squad as my pitcrew. They come with gimlet eyes and banks of computers out the back. You don't want to mess up in front of them. By that I don't mean stick it in the wall because that's unthinkable, but you have to find the balance between not driving so hard you run out of talent, dump it in the gravel and never get asked back and driving so slowly they wonder why you bothered to get on the plane.

"Don't worry, it's easy," says Gimmi Bruni as he leans into the cockpit. "Don't be scared to push, the car is fantastic, lots of downforce..."

Always start in gear, feet on brake and clutch, press buttons either side of the wheel and with a bang the RSR-19 wakes up. It might be the loudest car I've ever driven. The clutch is heavy but gentle so at least I don't stall it. I've got two laps, then a chat, then four laps and

then four more at Porsche's discretion, depending on how I've done so far. And after the first two it's not looking good. The car doesn't feel trustworthy, understeers too much on entry and relies too much on the traction control (set by Gimmi, which I'm not allowed to touch) at the exit. It feels ragged. The brake pedal is also disconcertingly long.

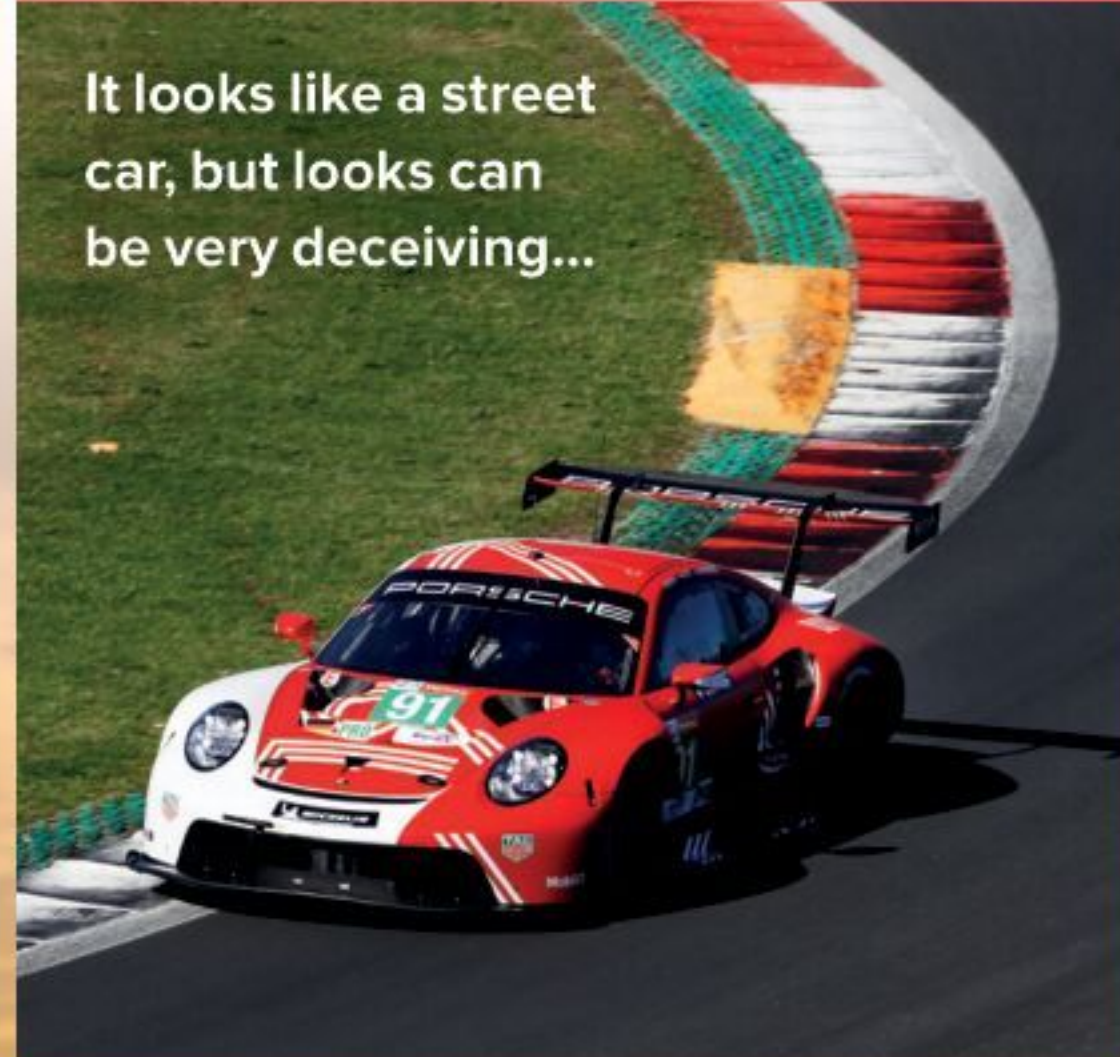
I come back in wearing my brave face and try not to sound like a graceless arse criticising the set up of a car that's good enough for a man who has won his class at Le Mans three times.

Happily, they ignore me. "Okay," I am told. "You can go again." But those few stationary moments were enough for my brain to study the data it had absorbed on those opening laps and now I drive more fluently. This in turn gets me into the virtuous circle where I am able to get the tyres and brakes into their operating windows, and suddenly the RSR feels like a different car. The power band is quite narrow, as you'd expect given that the engine lacks turbochargers, but so long as you wait for the change up lights to turn blue you're always in the thick of it. Unlike most rivals, Porsche doesn't use a proprietary gearbox but designs its own and I'm not sure I've ever pulled a





First, let's consult Porsche's cribsheet



smoother shift in a racing car. Engineers of high-performance road cars usually program in a slight jolt as the power is taken up again just to make the feel more sporting. With the RSR the reverse is the case.

The track is starting to flow now even though I'm aware of how restrictive it is for a car like this. However good it is at Vallelunga, somewhere like Silverstone or Spa would be another world. In slow corners the RSR feels caged. The A-pillar is thick so spotting the apex of left handers is hard and you find yourself using far more steering lock than anticipated. Grip levels are actually not that remarkable.

But give that bodywork and diffuser even a sniff of the action - and you'll feel the effect even in second-gear turns - and a whole new world awaits. The brakes may not be carbon but are still befuddling. Just out of interest I try to see if I can get the 'impending lock-up' lights to twinkle on the dashboard at whatever speed it will do in top gear, so probably the far side of 170mph. Not a flicker. Until you've shed enough speed and therefore downforce, it just feels like you've driven into a vat of treacle. And by the time that's happened you're way past the entry point to the corner and easing off the brakes as you angle into the apex.

And that's where it feels most otherworldly. Whereas the GT3 cars I've driven have felt like binary devices, effective but brutal and in need of much manhandling, I am certain that the only thing in the sports car world that could be more sophisticated than this would be a pure prototype. The lack of pitch and its ability to maintain ride height on entry is not so much confidence-enhancing as awe-inspiring.

I got my extra laps and now, fully dialled into the RSR (if not the circuit) and finally taking Gimmi at his word, I was treated to the most devastating display of pure ability I have experienced from a car related - however distantly - to something intended for road use.

Until I drove the RSR, I had wondered why it and other GTE cars are so much faster than GT3 machines, despite similar power and weight. In America where they race together under IMSA regs, the difference between the RSR-19 and Porsche's 911 GT3R is usually around 3sec a lap, which is a chunky gap, rising to over 5sec at a really rapid circuit like Road America. I wonder no more: their chassis and aero sophistication are in a different league.

And yet. About a year ago I drove a Porsche 911 Cup car, which is the entry level to works-developed Porsche 911 racing cars. Despite having only 30 fewer horsepower and weighing around 50kg less, it costs less than a fifth of the price of the RSR. Drive it and you see why: there's little aero there and no driver aids. It doesn't try to make life easy, it tries to make it hard. It's all down to you, and I like that.

If I had Gimmi's experience I'd tax the RSR-19 to the limit and find whole dimensions of challenge you could not hope to experience in a few laps on a strange track. At my level the RSR provided a technical demonstration I was fortunate to be able to see, whereas in the Cup car I felt I was participating.

Even so, when I go to Le Mans I'll do so with a new respect for the GT class cars and the RSR-19 in particular. Is it a 911? I'm not sure. Is it the most impressive car to look like a street machine that I've ever driven? By a mile. ●

"It doesn't try to make life easy, it tries to make life hard. And I like that"



SPECIFICATION

PRICE: £860,000

POWER: 515bhp

TORQUE: 347lb ft

ENGINE: Rear mid-mounted
4.2-litre flat six

GEARBOX: Six-speed semi-automatic paddle-shift

WEIGHT: 1245kg

MAX SPEED (LE MANS): 186mph

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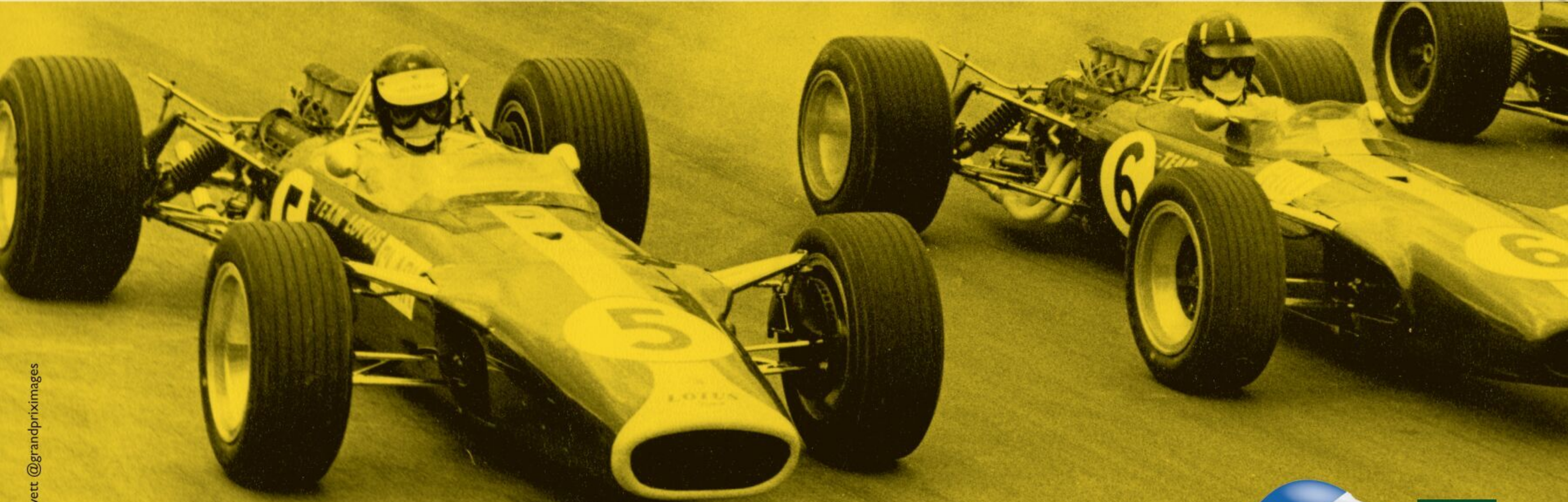
Jim Clark achieved 33 pole positions and won 25 races from his 72 Grands Prix starts, all for Team Lotus. Jim Clark is the most successful F1 driver of all time.

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What will Lewis do next?

Hamilton's 15th F1 season may well be the end of an era, whether the world champion wins a record eighth title or not. **Mark Hughes** weighs up the competition for the two seats at Mercedes and reveals why the future is bright for another Brit



LEWIS HAMILTON



IT HAS LASTED FOR A VERY LONG TIME, the Lewis Hamilton era of F1, a whirl of wheels and sunshine. But all successes come to an end some day. At 36, going into his 15th season of F1, Hamilton is gunning for that record-breaking eighth title. But maybe not as intensely as you might imagine, if his pre-season words are to be taken at face value. “I think I have made a real important decision in my mind that I don’t want that [eighth title] to be the deciding factor. I got into racing because I loved racing and I think that has got to be always at the core of what I do. If I don’t love racing and if all you are going for is accolades and world titles, I feel I could potentially lose my way. Of course, it is the ultimate dream but I don’t think necessarily it will be the deciding factor for if I stay on and keep going. I think it is more when I put that helmet on, I still have that smile when I leave the garage.”

As we head into the new season, are we looking at the end of an era? And if so, what comes after that?

In terms of the physical skills required for the sport, Hamilton could likely go on for years yet and continue extending his own record of success. But he’s clearly not preoccupied with records, now he has set the bar. So what would it take to keep that smile on his face as he departs the garage?

It’s probably more than just his immediate environment and the competitiveness of his car. He’s approaching something of a crossroads in his life. His profile lends his words and actions enormous weight – something he has become more aware of in the last couple of years and which has emboldened him to stand up and make his voice heard on issues way bigger than motor racing. Using the profile that racing has given him, the shape of his post-driving career is becoming more tangible: campaigner, diversity ambassador, a celebrity mover and shaker on issues close to his heart. Quite possibly in co-operation with Mercedes.

“What you saw in Austria for example with a young black girl on the podium for the first time in 70 years,” he points out. “That created an awareness in particular for young black girls and girls in general saw that it is a real possibility to become an engineer. Sparking those reactions. For example, Mercedes is now partnering with some schools in London and putting attention elsewhere and creating a bigger pool and a bigger opportunity to get into those STEM [science, technology, engineering, maths] subjects which perhaps wasn’t previously done.

“What I am not aware of is any other team doing that or acknowledging that it is even an issue and those are things that need to change

this year. It goes back to that accountability; we can all do more.

“A lot of brands that we work with sell cars to people from all different backgrounds and make their money from people from the outside world. I feel like from inside, it needs to reflect the outside world.

“I’m very proud of Mercedes for being open-minded to change. Really not just taking the smallest of steps, but really taking a step and seeing what we can do. We’ve done a deep dive into what we can do here. For them to be open to putting a [Lewis Hamilton] Foundation together and putting some money towards pushing for systematic change within our organisation, I think is fantastic. If we do what we’re planning to do, I think we’re going to create and open up pathways for young minorities to get into those STEM subjects. I’m hopeful that in the future we see it just being more diverse. Because it just works out better for everyone.”

This doesn’t necessarily mean he will stop racing at the end of his current one-year contract, but you have to wonder. “I’m kind of in a fortunate position where I’ve achieved most of the stuff that I’ve wanted to achieve up to this point. So there’s no real need necessarily to plan too far ahead in the future.

“I love racing
and that has
always got to
be at the core
of what I do”

I think we live in quite an unusual period of time in life, and I just wanted one year. Then we can talk about if we do more, and keep adding to it if we have to.”

If we have to... Mmm. So if a retired but campaigning Hamilton was working in association with Mercedes off-track, what would the team do on it? There are three drivers in the frame for what would be two available seats: Valtteri Bottas, George Russell and Max Verstappen. Verstappen – who has been linked on and off with the team since even before his debut in Formula 1 – is the longest shot, as technically he’s under Red Bull contract until the end of 2023. But this is F1 and things can happen. Red Bull team principal Christian Horner has confirmed there is a break clause in the contract whereby if a certain performance criterion is not met, he could be free to move.

“As with all these things, to force a driver who doesn’t want to be there, it’s more about relationships than contracts,” says Horner. “You only pull a contract out of a drawer when you’ve got a problem, in my experience.”

The chance to slot into Hamilton’s seat at Mercedes might constitute just such ‘a problem’ for Red Bull. In many ways the Dutchman, 13 years Hamilton’s junior, is the obvious king in waiting, a driver of immense speed and aggression who has been operating at an exceptionally high level for several seasons – whose CV vastly undersells his ability, who would undoubtedly already be a multiple world champion if the Red Bull team he joined in 2016 was at the level of the pre-hybrid days.

An average of just two victories per season in his five years with the team has got to be a frustration to a competitor confident he could go wheel-to-wheel with Hamilton. The loss of Honda’s partnership at the end of this season is just one more concern about the team’s prospects. His best career years are in danger of passing him by and regardless of his closeness with the Milton Keynes team, he may feel

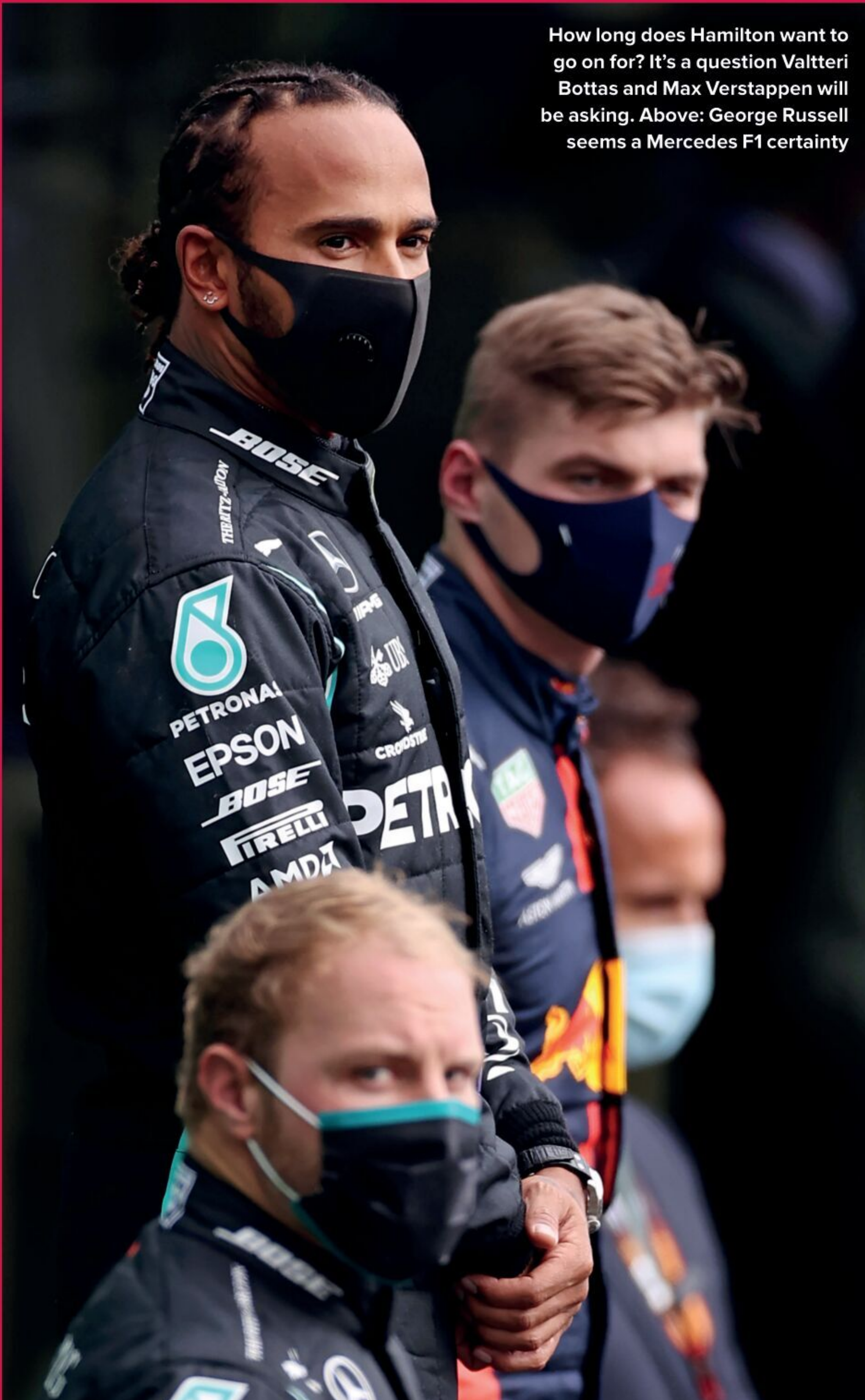
Some believe Hamilton’s political stance has made his name more famous than the sport itself, but the driver is now aware that when he speaks, people listen



LEWIS HAMILTON



How long does Hamilton want to go on for? It's a question Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen will be asking. Above: George Russell seems a Mercedes F1 certainty



obliged to take the Mercedes seat should it become available. “At the end of the day I don’t know what Lewis is going to do,” Verstappen said at the launch of Red Bull’s 2021 car. “I just focus on myself and I’m very focused on this year and trying to make it a success. It’s still early in the season for those kind of things. I’m not really thinking about it at this stage.” Hardly a resounding dismissal of the idea...

At the launch of the new Mercedes W12, Bottas seemed resigned that this could be his last season in a title-contending car. With the sensational performance of George Russell as Hamilton’s stand-in at the Sakhir Grand Prix last year, it’s easy to see why Bottas may be feeling a little insecure about his long-term future with the team regardless of Hamilton’s plans. Russell, despite no prior seat time in the car, even in the simulator, despite not fitting the cockpit properly, lost out on pole to Bottas by mere hundredths of a second prior to out-performing him in the race. But for an inopportune safety car and a tyre mix-up in the Mercedes pitlane, he was all set to have won the race unchallenged.

Even after being forced to stop again to have the correct tyres fitted, he was able to make an aggressive pass on Bottas and might even have still won but for a subsequent puncture. It was a brilliant show of strength, one which Bottas acknowledged made him look bad.

“The ultimate goal for me this season when I get to the last race in Abu Dhabi [December 12] is that I can look back and say that I did 100%, I did every single bit that I could to win the title,” says Bottas. “That’s the goal for this year. That is going to be the same for all the people around me, whoever I’m working with. I’ll demand as much as I feel like I need to, to get the support and get the information that I need, and maybe that way, I can be a bit more selfish. One year in a lifetime, giving everything that you have, is actually quite a short time.”

It has the sound of Bottas looking at this season as maybe his last opportunity. Russell, whose career has been supported by Mercedes and who, prior to his contract with Williams, was an intrinsic part of the team, working in the simulator, sitting in on debriefs, is in the final year of that Williams contract.

“The future is very bright for George,” said Mercedes boss Toto Wolff recently. “He does not need to be concerned. He will definitely play a role in our future line-up. He just has to have trust and patience. Today we are concentrating on our two drivers, Valtteri and Lewis. This is our regular team. We will see what the future brings.”

“Toto has always given me his word, and always given me the opportunity when he believes I deserve it,” says Russell. “They



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Is the motivation there for further titles? Hamilton is adamant he's not driven by records and stats alone

have told me I am part of that future, and whenever that may be in their car again is when they believe the time is right. A lot of people think next year is the natural path. But equally things change very quickly in motor sport, especially in Formula 1. I had a taste of life at the front of the grid last year but I am just focused on the here and now."

How this threesome of drivers fit into the Mercedes 2022 plan depends entirely upon what Hamilton decides to do. If he continues, the expectation is that Russell would slot into Bottas' seat alongside. That overlap between Hamilton and Russell would at least give the team continuity when Hamilton does eventually stop at some later date. If Hamilton retires at the end of '21, then Bottas possibly gets the reprieve of another one-year contract - alongside Russell. But if Hamilton retires and Verstappen is somehow available and willing, it's difficult to see how there would be a place for Bottas, and we could be looking at a

"I have an extraordinary relationship with Mercedes. It's deep"

Verstappen/Russell line-up. There would be no continuity in that case, but if a team is going to change both drivers, 2022 is probably the best year to do it, as the radical all-new regulations for sidepod venturi cars make it a clean-sheet new era, with no link at all to the current cars beyond the power units. It sounds as though Bottas may even have discussed this logic with the team.

"I get it," he says. "I kind of get it, if the team has the opportunity for the big change [of regulations] coming in 2022, to have options, to choose both of their drivers, I think it's good for the team. But honestly, from my side, no rush really. I'm just full gas for the season and trying to get to my goals."


After his performances in Sakhir last year Russell said: "Hopefully I've made the decision for Toto more difficult for 2022 or maybe even sooner." Obviously that '21 possibility didn't

come to be. But just as Williams quite rightly demanded a significant sum from Mercedes to make Russell available to be Hamilton's stand-in, so it's believed it put a *big* price on him if Mercedes wanted him for this year. Given that he becomes contractually free at the end of the year anyway, it probably seemed an indulgent spend for Wolff.

But of the four drivers, the one with the biggest probability of being in a Mercedes next year is actually Russell. It's very difficult to envisage a scenario in which he does not take the seat that's long seemed his destiny. The question is whether he is competing against Hamilton, Verstappen or Bottas as a team-mate. That is largely in Hamilton's hands.

"It's not like it's my first rodeo," says the world champion. "I think I've been in this position where at least I've been asked the question for a period of time. I don't really feel pressured in that sense."

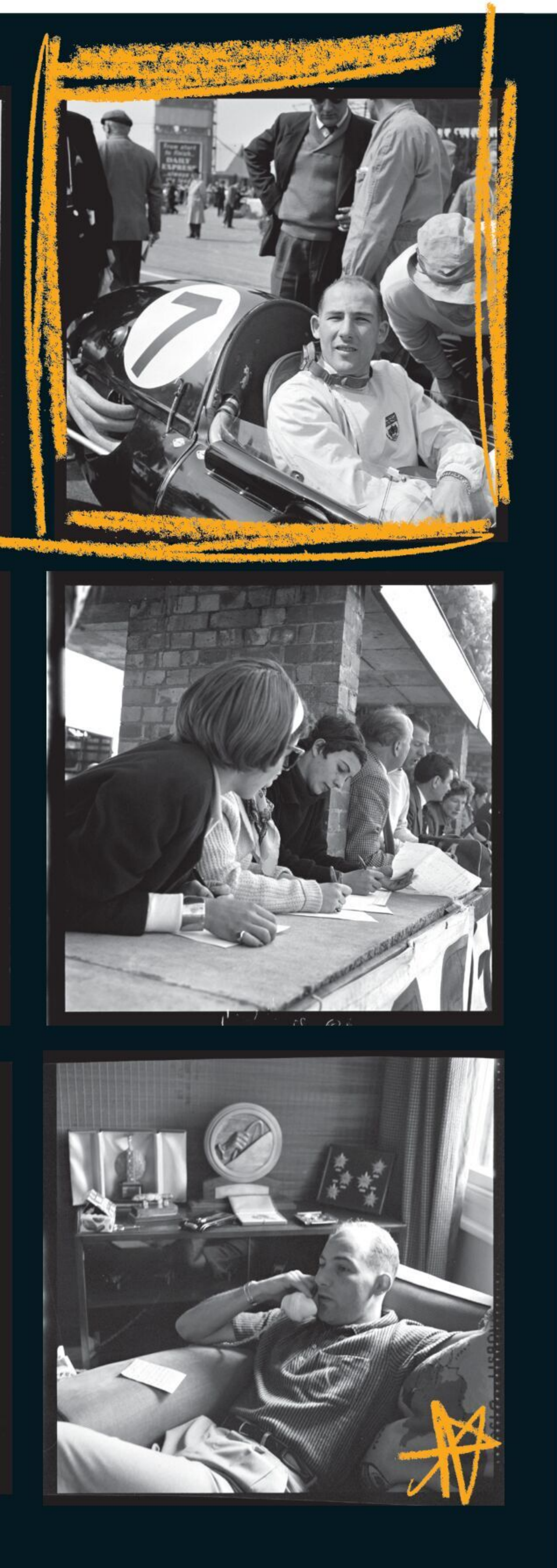
"Naturally, I continue to have huge belief in and always bet on myself, in terms of I know what it takes to deliver. I think I have an extraordinary relationship with Mercedes that's incredibly deep, and I think there's more than just racing that we will probably end up doing together."

"As you've seen, with this Foundation, there's a lot of great things that we will do moving forwards. So that will be a constant discussion through the year, I'm sure. In terms of whether this is the road I want to continue down? It will come to me, I'm sure." 



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A day in the life of Stirling Moss

While researching his latest book *The Boy*, **Richard Williams** uncovered a set of never-before-seen photographs which show the driver, who died a year ago this month, at the very height of his career

PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL WARD



Stirling and Katie arrived at Silverstone in style, in a works Aston Martin



Already in white overalls, Moss is photographed by Michael Ward – on one of his first assignments



Moss shared driving duties with Tony Brooks in the Rob Walker Cooper-Climax T43

LOSE YOUR EYES AND THINK OF Stirling Moss racing on a home circuit, and the chances are you will be imagining him at Aintree, where he won the British Grand Prix in 1955 and 1957, or at Goodwood, where he raced a 500cc machine at the circuit's inaugural meeting in 1948 and went on to win the Tourist Trophy at the circuit four times, and where a still-unexplained crash on Easter Monday 1962 ended his professional career.

Silverstone is unlikely to be the setting that most readily springs to mind. And yet, over the 15 seasons of his career as a professional racing driver, Moss started 48 races at Silverstone, winning 22 of them. The fast sweeps of the converted bomber base in Northamptonshire turned out to be a fine stage for his versatility and virtuosity.

His first visit had come in October 1948. He was fighting for the lead in a support race at the inaugural British GP meeting when the engine drive sprocket of his Cooper-JAP worked loose on the last of the three laps. In the equivalent race the following year he registered his first Silverstone victory in the 500cc heat and finished second in the final after a piston broke with the finish line in sight, an early glimmer of the famous Moss jinx.

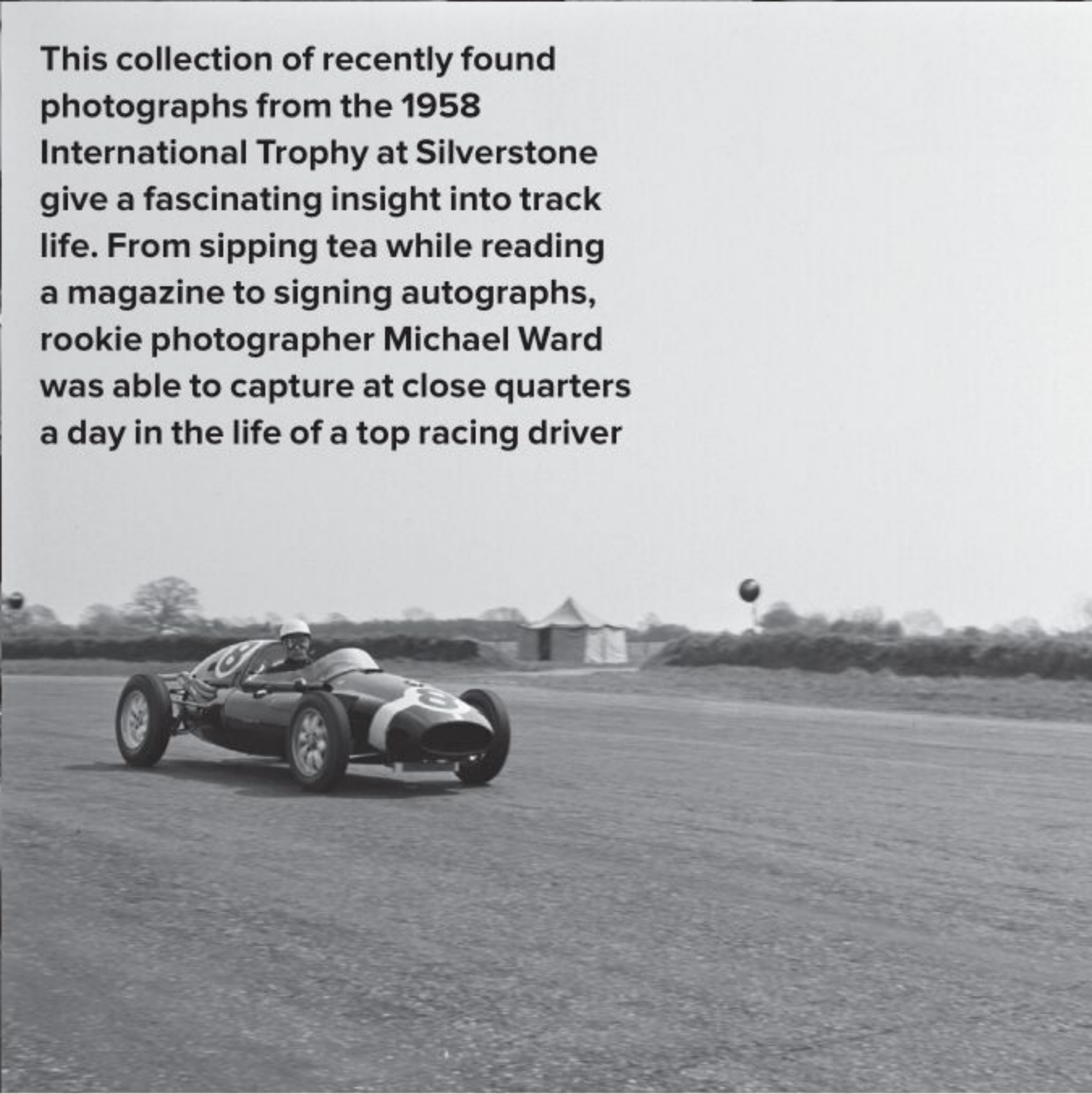
By the time he and his wife Katie set off for the circuit on the morning of May 3, 1958, he had won there in Cooper and Kieft 500s, in a Jaguar XK120, C-type and Maserati 300S sports cars, in a Jaguar Mark VII saloon, and in the Vanwall, which took him to a one-off victory in the 1956 International Trophy, a performance which persuaded him that here, finally, was a British-made F1 car capable of mounting a credible challenge to the continental teams.

He arrived at Silverstone for the 1958 International Trophy having already won the first grand prix of the season, in Buenos Aires. Not in the Vanwall, which was unavailable since its engine was still being converted to meet new regulations requiring the use of pump petrol rather than more exotic blends. Instead he had used Rob Walker's little 2-litre Cooper-Climax T43 to outfox the more powerful Ferraris. Returning to the UK and with the Vanwall still not ready, he had raced the Cooper twice, retiring from the Glover Trophy at Goodwood and winning the Aintree 200.

For the International Trophy, the third in this little series of non-championship F1 races on British circuits, the entry list also included Peter Collins in the Scuderia Ferrari's lone Dino 246, Jean Behra and Ron Flockhart in BRM P25s, Jack Brabham and Roy Salvadori in works Cooper T45s, Tony

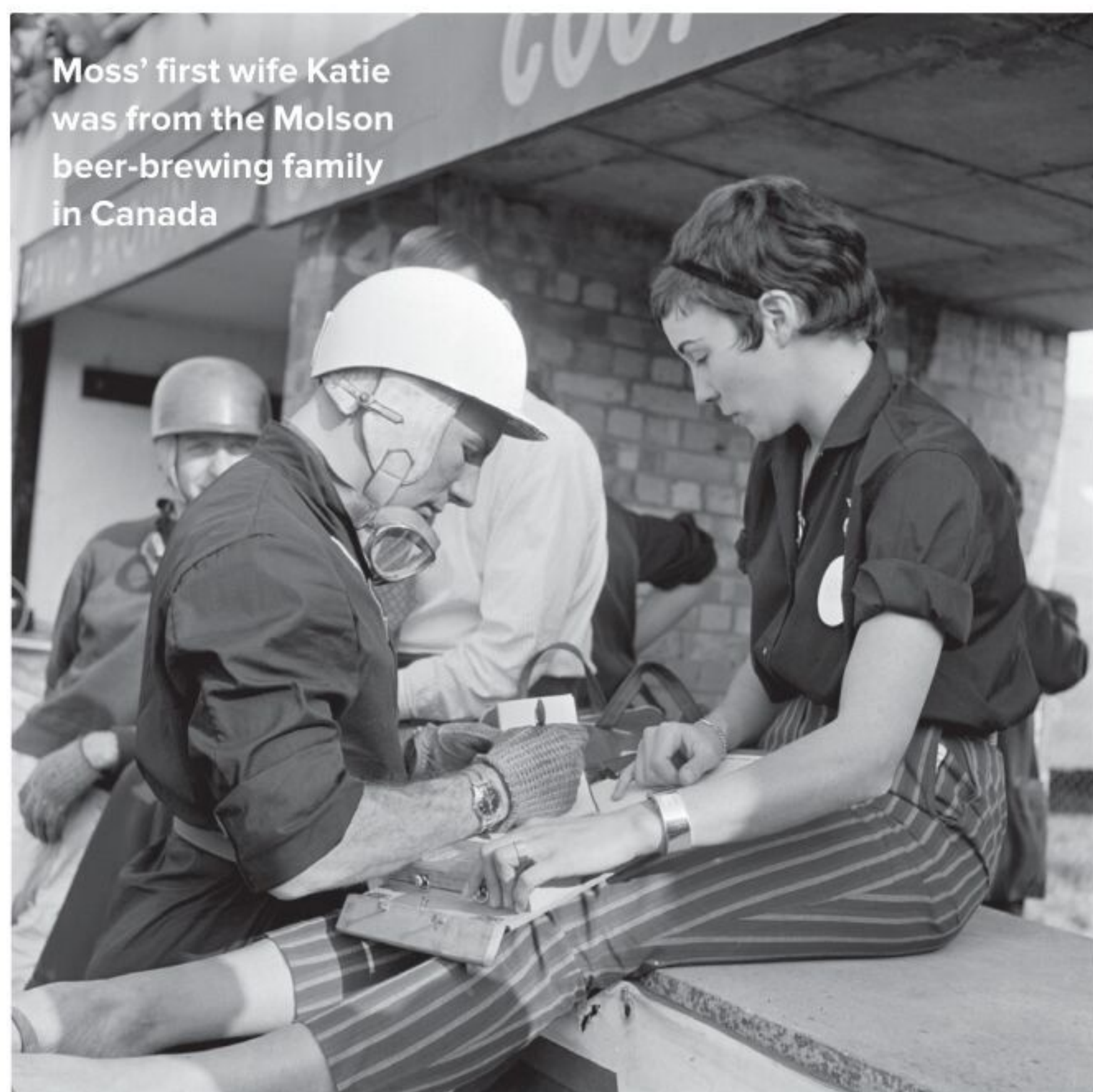


MOSS REDISCOVERED

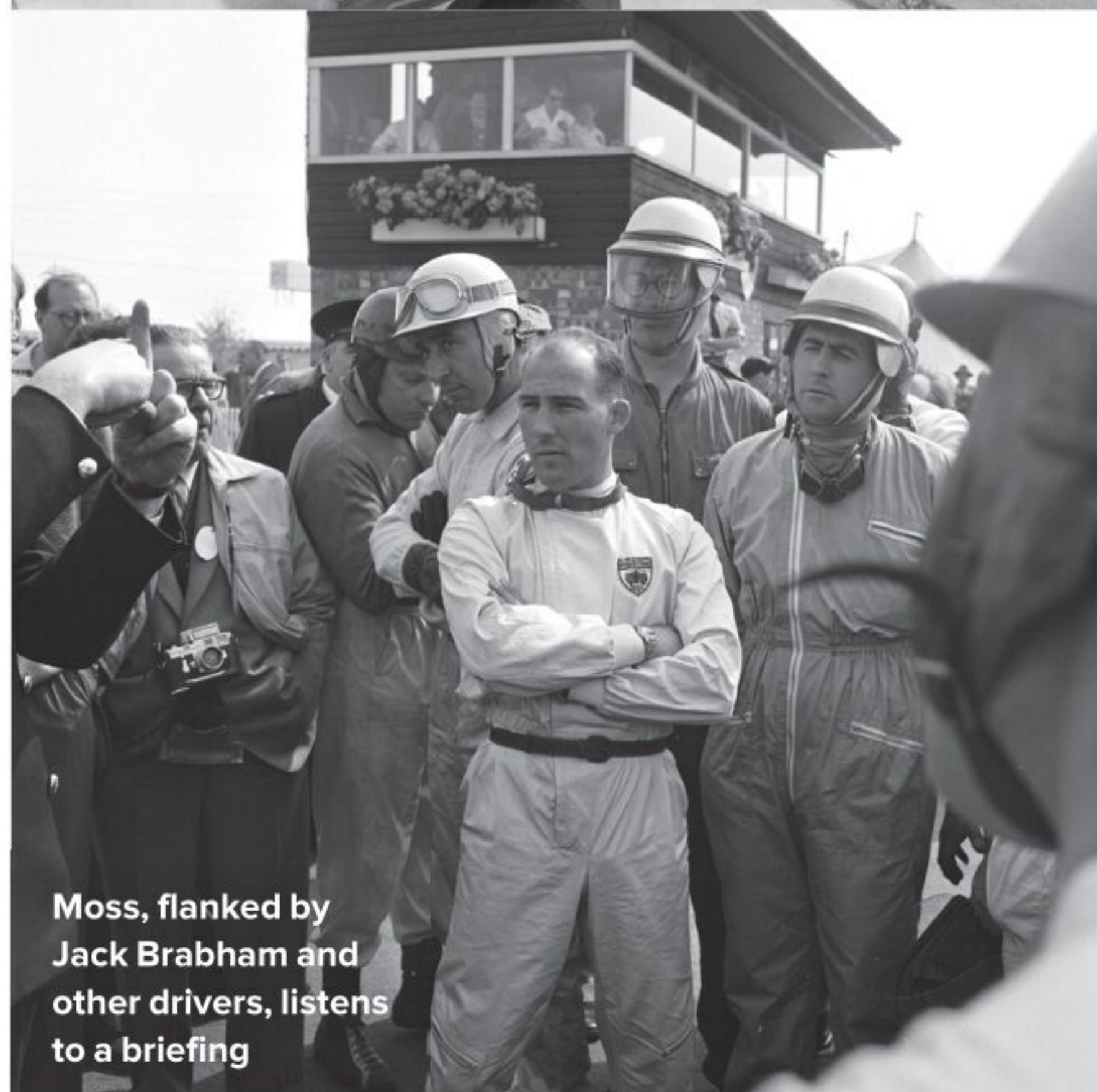


This collection of recently found photographs from the 1958 International Trophy at Silverstone give a fascinating insight into track life. From sipping tea while reading a magazine to signing autographs, rookie photographer Michael Ward was able to capture at close quarters a day in the life of a top racing driver

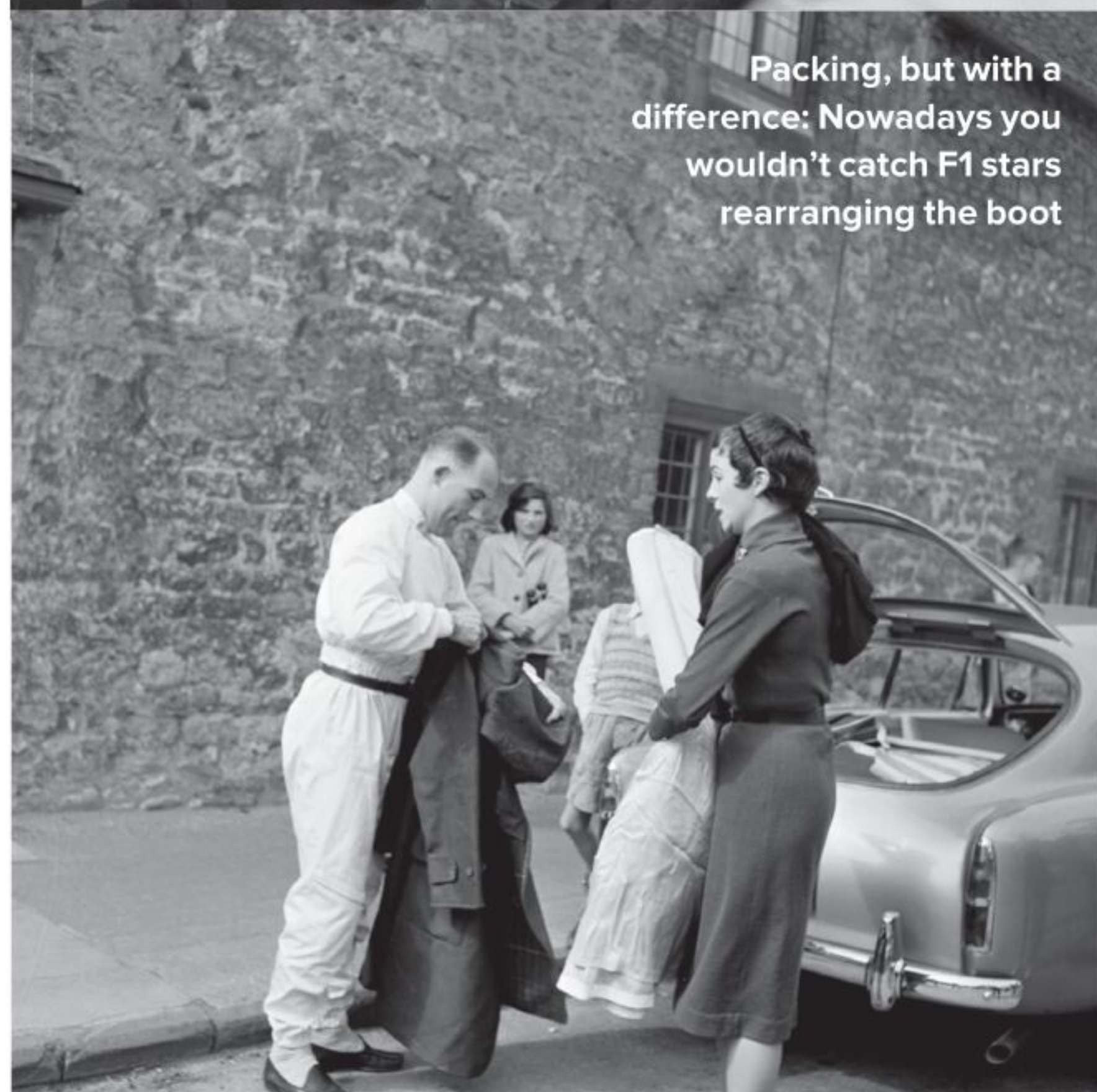
MOSS REDISCOVERED



Moss' first wife Katie was from the Molson beer-brewing family in Canada



Moss, flanked by Jack Brabham and other drivers, listens to a briefing



Packing, but with a difference: Nowadays you wouldn't catch F1 stars rearranging the boot

Brooks - his Vanwall team-mate - in a second Walker Cooper, and a flock of obsolete Maseratis whose drivers included Masten Gregory and Jo Bonnier. To fill out the weekend Moss also entered the accompanying sports car race in a works Aston Martin, a 3-litre DBR3, with Brooks in the team's other entry, a 3.9-litre DBR2.

He and Katie, married in London seven months earlier, loaded their luggage into the back of an Aston Martin DB Mark III borrowed from the factory, stayed overnight near Silverstone, and were at the circuit in time for practice on the Friday, during which Moss put up the third-fastest time for the F1 race, completing the three-car front row alongside Salvadori and Brabham, with Collins and Behra behind them.

The Mosses were accompanied throughout the weekend by Michael Ward, a young man who had just given up acting and was embarking on a career as a photographer. This was his first effort, and it was made possible only when Stirling, whom he knew slightly, lent him equipment. "He took me to lunch at the Steering Wheel Club in Mayfair and said that as long as I didn't get in his way that was fine," Ward said before his death in 2011. "As I was leaving, I remembered that I didn't have a camera and I couldn't afford the cost of hiring one. So I went back to the table and said, 'There's one snag - I'm afraid I don't have a camera. May I borrow yours?' He had a Rolleiflex 2.8. He smiled and said, 'Yes but mind you look after it.'"

At the end of the meeting, Moss made a point of asking for it back. One shot, of Katie looking anxious on the pitwall, was published in *Woman's Own*. The rest remained unseen. From this tentative beginning, Ward went on to a long and distinguished career as a *Sunday Times* news photographer, his assignments including the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the Aberfan disaster.

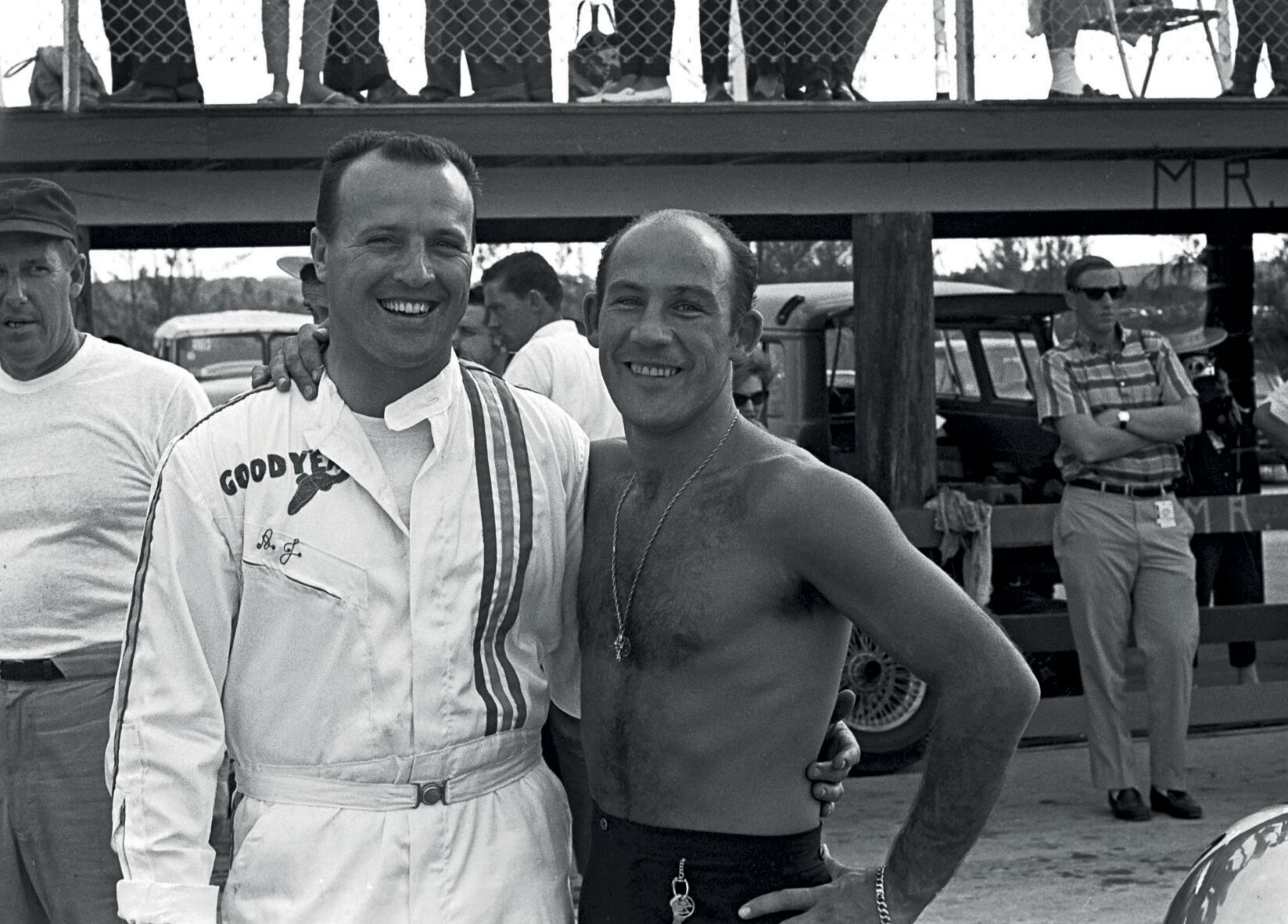
ON THE SATURDAY, STIRLING ARRIVED ALREADY kitted out in his white racing overalls. Katie had a sweater draped across her shoulders as a precaution against Silverstone's spring climate. The weather stayed dry and not too cold, but the day proved disappointing. In the sports car race the Astons of Moss and Brooks were outpaced by the Lister-Jaguars of Archie Scott Brown and Masten Gregory and the Ferrari of Mike Hawthorn, and when Moss felt his engine tightening as he started to challenge for third place he pulled in and retired to prevent further damage. His fortunes were no better in the F1 race. Having stalled at the start, he gave the crowd a thrill as he battled back to fifth place when, just before half distance, his gearbox casing split, leaving Collins and Ferrari to claim the spoils.

This was far from the most memorable weekend of what was, even by Moss' standards, an extraordinary year. In 1958 there were 20 wins from 40 races in 15 countries and eight makes of car. He had avoided a kidnap attempt by revolutionaries in Cuba, feared he was about to die when the steering of his Maserati broke at 165mph on the Monza banking, and saw out the year at a Hollywood party in the company of Tony Curtis, Steve McQueen and Joan Collins. With Fangio gone, he was now the world's most famous racing driver. But he had lost the world championship by a single point, the result of a chivalrous gesture towards his greatest rival. It was the closest he would ever come. ●

A color photograph of Richard Williams, a man with a white racing helmet and a white polo shirt, sitting in the driver's seat of a blue and white open-wheel race car. He is looking off to the side with a focused expression. His left hand is resting on his chin, and he is wearing a watch and a ring. The car has a wooden steering wheel and a clear windshield. In the background, a red race car with the number 96 is visible on a track, along with other spectators and cars in the distance.

The calypso kid

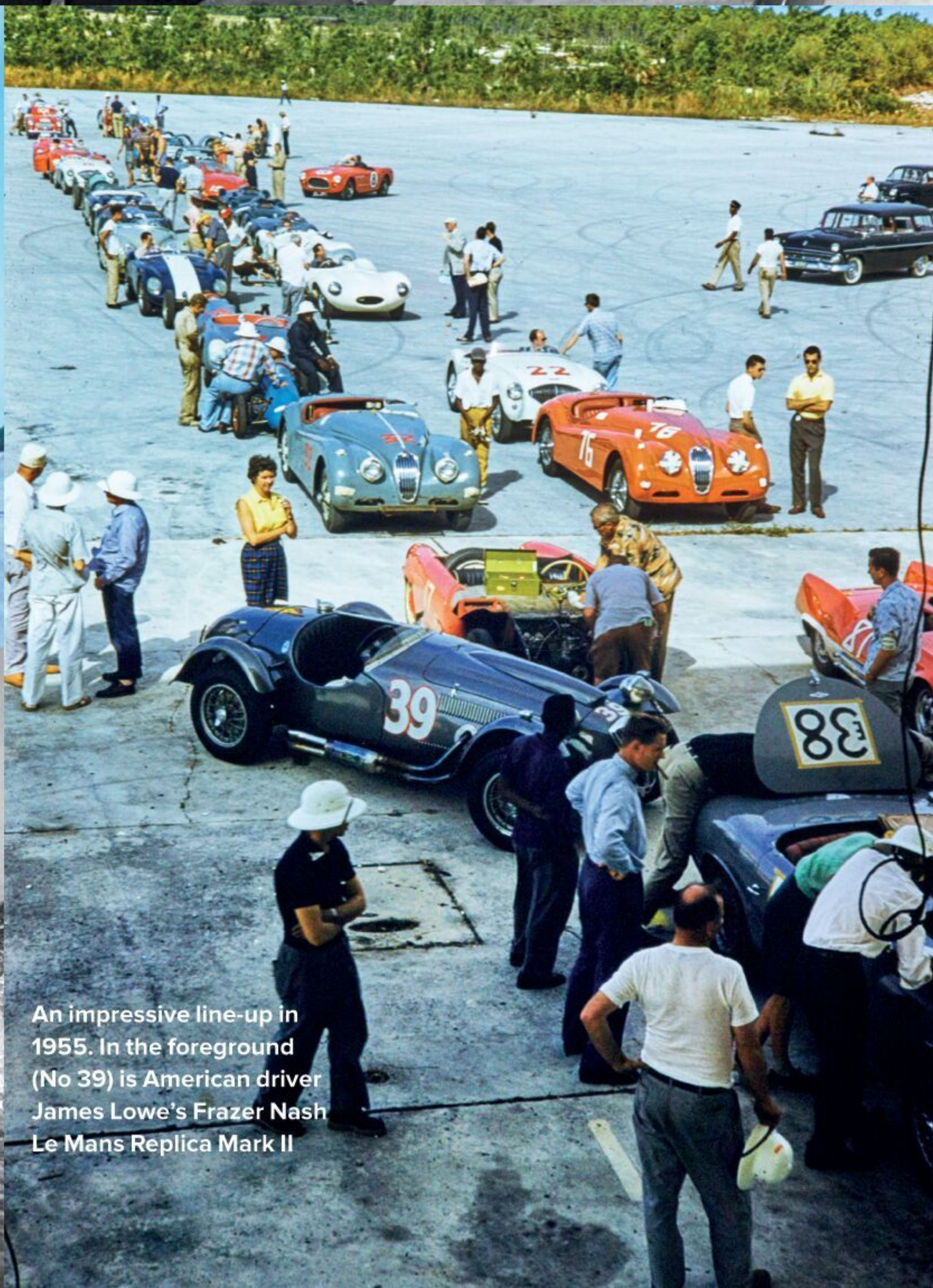
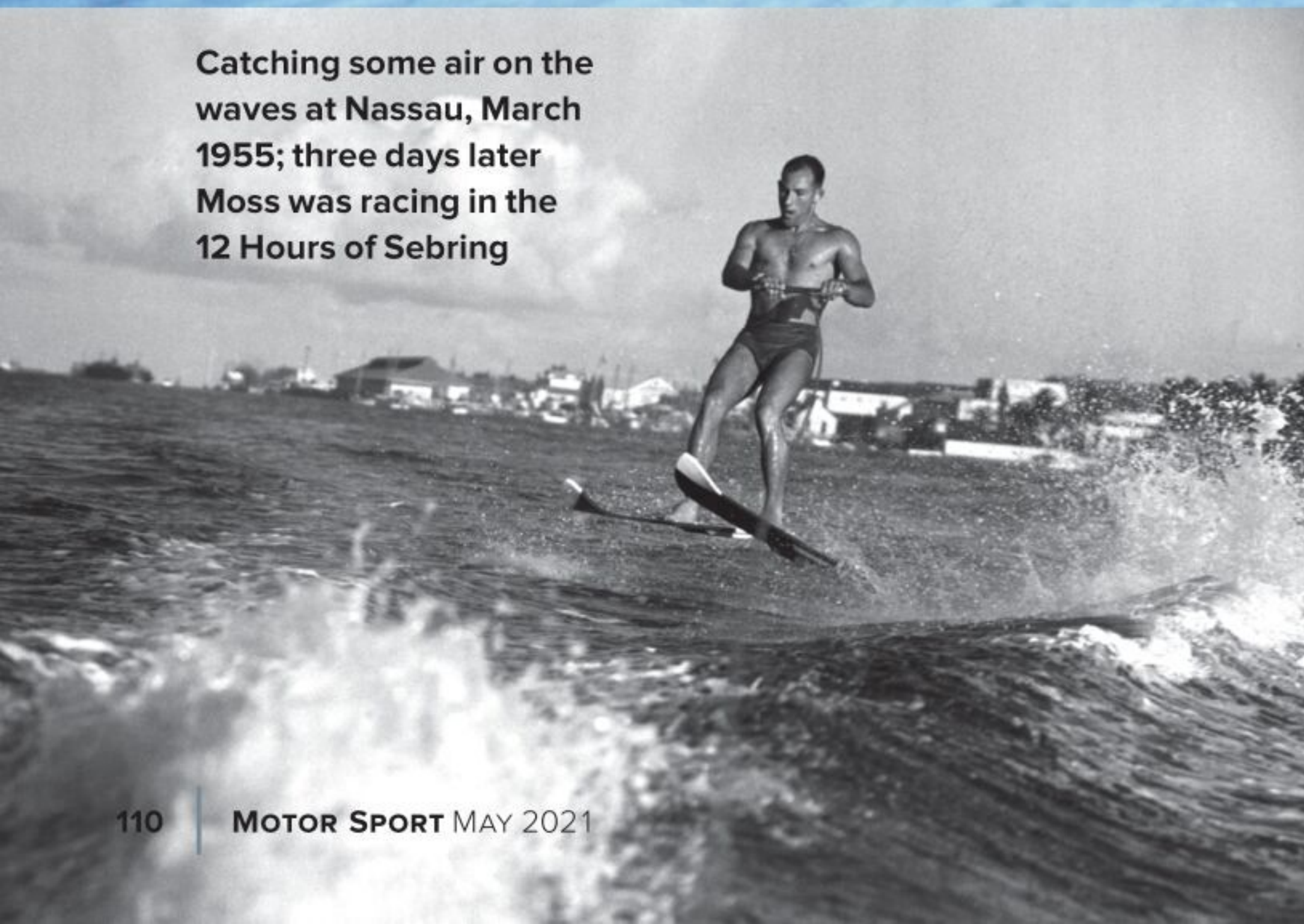
Our hero was a regular visitor to the Bahamas for '50% racing and 50% fun'. In an exclusive extract from his new book, **Richard Williams** takes us back to the sun and sounds of Speed Week



Le Mans-style start in 1955.
Above: busman's holiday
for AJ Foyt and Moss, 1963



Catching some air on the
waves at Nassau, March
1955; three days later
Moss was racing in the
12 Hours of Sebring



An impressive line-up in
1955. In the foreground
(No 39) is American driver
James Lowe's Frazer Nash
Le Mans Replica Mark II

“Nassau,” the US journalist turned racing driver Denise McCluggage wrote, “was a string of coloured lights across a tropical night. Nassau was the sharp blip of racing engines on a sun-drenched dock, the soft boiling-fudge speech of the Bahamians selling straw hats along Bay Street. Nassau was an umbrella-drink concoction of star-dipped nights, white sands, conch fritters, a sea rimmed in turquoise (and as clear as gasoline), and racing, racing, racing.”

On Stirling Moss' first visit, before there was any racing there at all, he fell in love with the place. He enjoyed it so much during the short visit at the end of 1953 that he returned a few weeks later and would pay regular visits in the following years. It was part of the sterling area, which, in the days before the invention of credit cards, meant there were no restrictions on how much cash could be taken in or out, and its climate in the months of the European winter made it an attractive alternative to the popular French Riviera.

On his second visit, in February 1954, Moss spent a fortnight at the British Colonial Hotel. In conversation with its owner, Sir

Sydney Oakes, and the holidaying English sports car manufacturer Donald Healey, talk turned to the possibility of staging a motor race on one of the island's airfields. The initial idea belonged to an energetic and volatile American, Sherman 'Red' Crise, who had imported liquor from the Bahamas during Prohibition and promoted midget car racing in his native New Jersey. Crise invited the famous English driver to take a look at the disused Windsor Field. Clearly the advice was positive, because when Moss returned in February 1955, he was given reports of the first Nassau Speed Week, held three months earlier.

The newly created Bahamas Automobile Club was chaired by Crise; its president was Oakes, who was also a member of the Nassau Development Board. Sir Sydney owed his hereditary title to his late father, Sir Harry Oakes, a gold-mining tycoon whose gruesome murder in 1943 had made Nassau a focal point of international attention. Various theories

were advanced. A French yachtsman who had eloped with Sir Harry's beautiful 18-year-old daughter was arrested, tried and acquitted, but almost 80 years later the crime remains unsolved.

The scandal added a certain dark glamour to Nassau's reputation, which blossomed in peacetime. Sir Sydney, having succeeded to his father's baronetcy, was keen on the idea of a race meeting as a splashy start to the tourist season. His marriage to a strikingly good-looking and vivacious Danish woman, Greta Hartmann, had made the dashing couple symbols of the resort's growing appeal to the international jet-set.

As a sporting event, the Nassau Speed Week was a combination of Royal Ascot, the Henley Regatta and the pre-war Brooklands meetings, but with even more social activity and a guarantee of better weather. “We like to think it's 50% racing and 50% fun,” Red Crise said. Throughout the week the night

“Nassau Speed Week was Ascot and Henley with better weather”



A parade of power through town in 1955. The white Austin-Healey 100 was driven by American JB Orr – a Speed Week regular



It must be the English accent: Moss attracts attention at the Windsor Field Road Course in December 1955

life would be in full swing at the Pilot House Club, Dirty Dick's and Blackbeard's Tavern.

Among those drawn to this festival of speed were wealthy American sportsmen who had acquired the habit of buying European sports cars, either for themselves or for professional drivers to race. That first year brought Austin Healeys, Ferraris, MGs and Jaguar XK120s - one with a Confederate

flag painted on the driver's door - shipped across the 150 miles of water from Miami, the competitors' travel and accommodation expenses met by the Bahamian government. Alfonso de Portago and Masten Gregory were among the winners, both in Ferraris.

When Moss returned in December, it was to take part himself. He was a member of the Nassau crowd now, watching firework

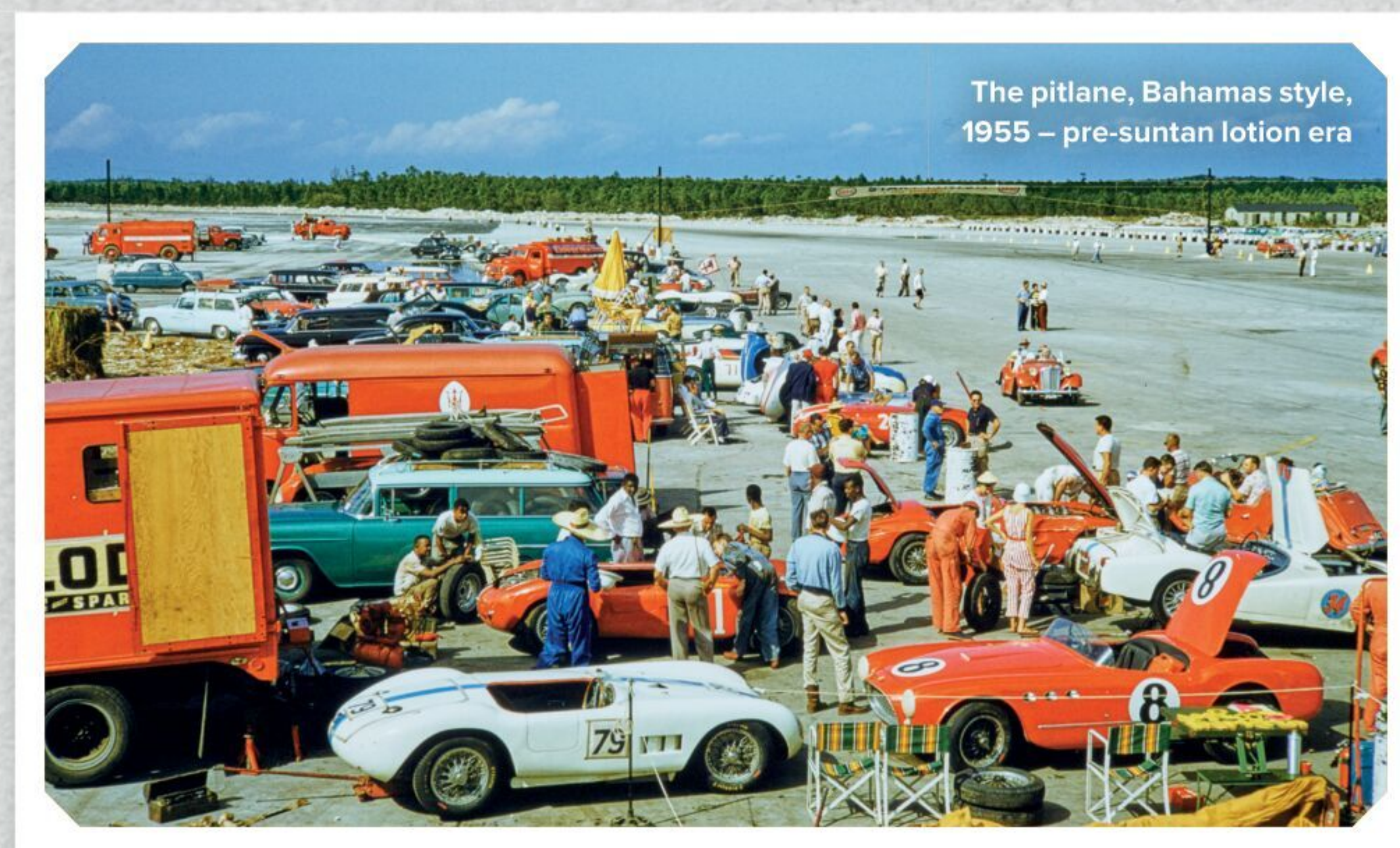
displays from Red Crise's yacht, dining with Sir Sydney and Lady Greta, enjoying the nightly black-tie parties.

The two big races, the Governor's Trophy and the Bahamas Automobile Cup, were won by the Ferraris of de Portago and Phil Hill. Stirling's Austin Healey 100S, entered by Donald Healey, was completely outgunned by the bigger machinery.

In 1956 he took his parents and sister Pat along for a Speed Week holiday. This time he was more suitably equipped, at the wheel of a Maserati 300S, with which he won the 200-mile Nassau Trophy. The 40 starters included three Chevrolet Corvettes entered by the factory, an indication of the event's growing prestige. By now Sir Sydney and his wife were divorced, although they remained fixtures at the event and the newly unattached Greta drew admirers - particularly among the visiting drivers - like moths to a scented candle.

For 1957 the Speed Week moved from the scruffy Windsor Field to a five-mile course laid out on the runways of the more modern Oakes Field. Moss arrived with a works Aston Martin DBR2: after finishing fourth in the Governor's Trophy, he lent the car to Ruth Levy for the Ladies' Race, only

REVS INSTITUTE



The pitlane, Bahamas style, 1955 - pre-suntan lotion era

Winning ways in 1956 for Moss at Windsor Airfield in a Maserati 300S. Competition included Masten Gregory and Alfonso de Portago



for her to roll and wreck it while battling with the Porsche of Denise McCluggage.

Not wanting the spectators to be deprived of further chances to see their star attraction, the committee persuaded a Dutch amateur named Jan de Vroom, a US-based importer of Italian glass and lighting, to lend Moss his 3.5-litre Ferrari 290MM. Moss repaid the generosity with two wins, including the Nassau Trophy. Six years after being humiliated by Enzo Ferrari when an entry promised for the Bari Grand Prix failed to materialise, these were his first-ever races in a car built in Maranello. De Vroom's car had been bought for him by his lover, a Rockefeller heiress; his brief racing career was long over by the time he was murdered in his New York apartment, his throat cut by two hustlers, in 1973.

It was during one of Stirling's early visits to the Bahamas that he met Katie Molson, the daughter of a Canadian brewery tycoon, who was working at a local theatre while staying there with an aunt. She was 18 and he was 24. They shared an interest in water-skiing - at which, along with snow skiing, clay-pigeon shooting and fly-fishing, she was an expert - and began seeing each other regularly after meeting up again at Le Mans

"In 1956 Moss was more suitably equipped with a Maserati 300S"

in 1956. They married the following year, and started building a holiday home in Nassau, a two-bedroomed house designed by Stirling, called Blue Cloud.


Having missed the 1958 Speed Week after a row over starting money, he was back with the DBR2 in 1959, winning a third Nassau Trophy. In 1960 he took part in the only kart race of his career, finishing 13th, before winning the Nassau TT in Rob Walker's Ferrari 250GT SWB. On his final competitive visit, in 1961, he repeated the win with the same car but retired from the Nassau Trophy when the rear suspension of his Lotus 19 collapsed.

The Speed Week continued until 1966, after which it was decided that a much-needed restoration of the track would be overly expensive to justify its survival. Perhaps, too, some of the social appeal of motor racing had started to fade as the professionals displaced the playboys.

Katie and Stirling had parted company in 1960. Both of them married again, and divorced again, and eventually Stirling was married a third time, to Susie Paine, with lasting success. Over the years he and Katie rebuilt their friendship. He had given her Blue Cloud as part of the divorce settlement and she continued to live in Nassau, a patron of the arts and of various charities. When a film crew arrived to shoot sequences for *Thunderball* in 1965, it was Katie who shot the clay pigeons at which Sean Connery appeared to be aiming. In 2015 she returned to Montreal, where some of her time was spent helping in a women's shelter. She died on April 15, 2020, three days after Stirling. ●



***The Boy: Stirling Moss - A Life in 60 Laps* by Richard Williams is published in hardback by Simon & Schuster. It is available from April 1, priced £20.**



FULLY C

After a lot of hype and big name signings Extreme E is about to arrive at an inhospitable location for some environmentally sussed racing. **Simon Arron** plugs in to the new series



HARGED





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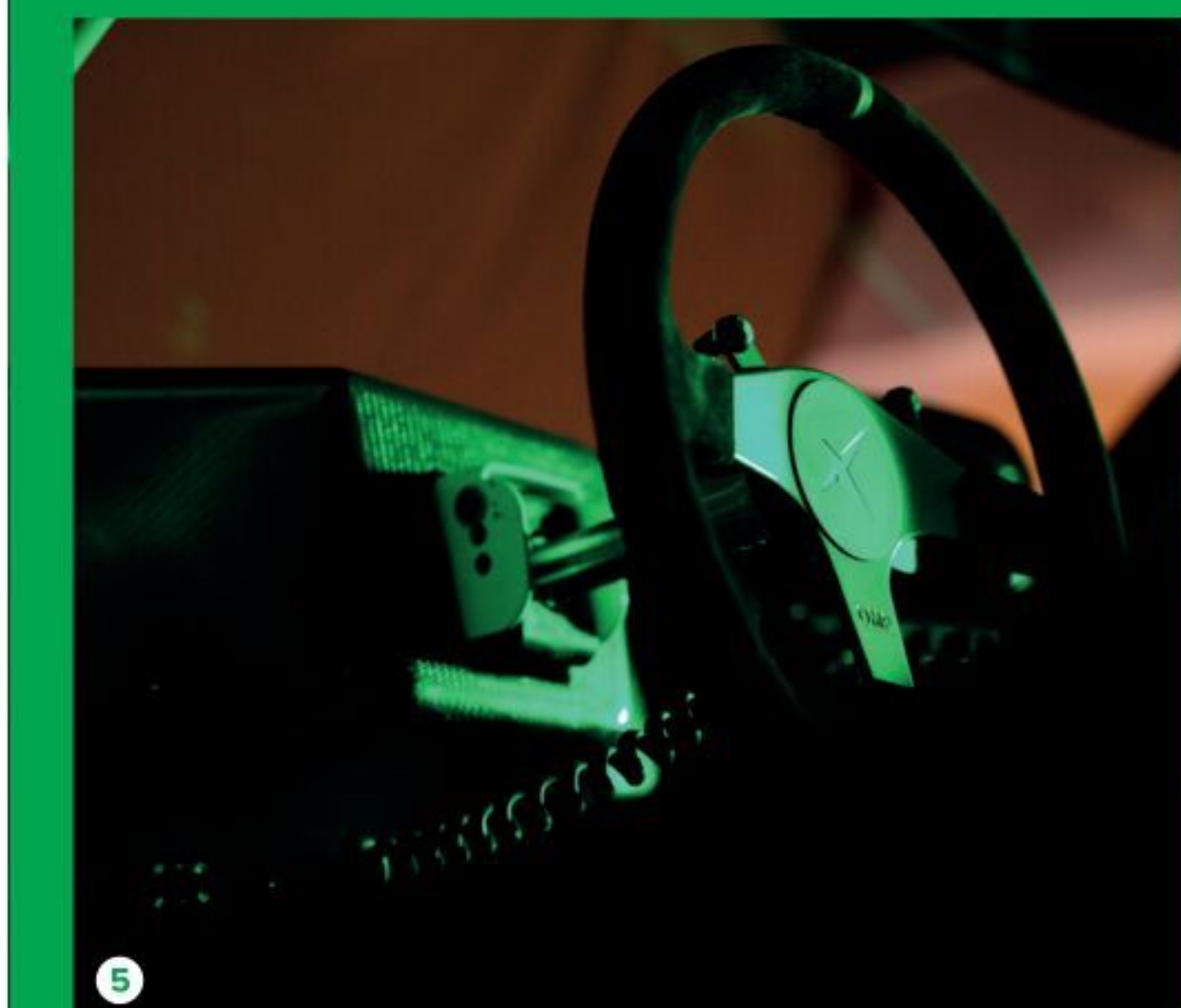
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1. *St Helena* is Extreme E's lifeline; sadly the dazzle camouflage has been replaced
2. Odyssey 21 is made by Spark Racing Technology in France
3. Extreme E co-founder Gil de Ferran is the former McLaren F1 team sporting director
4. By entering the X44 team, Lewis Hamilton is again locking horns with big issues

5. The vehicle will be used by all teams
6. Loading up *St Helena*; first stop Saudi Arabia
7. Ganassi is an all-American affair
8. Life in the vast lane
9. Loeb, you may want to look away now... cars share a common chassis design; mono shock damping and double wishbones give a massive 385mm suspension travel



7



8



9

HAMILTON. SAINZ. ANDRETTI. Loeb. Rosberg. Ganassi. Button. Even before a wheel had turned in anger, Extreme E was already infused with a sumptuous motor sport pedigree. And while the notion of an electric SUV racing in remote locations might be anathema to anyone who thinks a racing car can look only like a Maserati 250F or a Brabham BT44, please bear with us.

Long before it had a name, this concept first fermented in the mind of Gil de Ferran, Indianapolis 500 winner, twice a champion in the now-defunct US-based CART/PPG series and a diehard petrolhead.

"I was just sitting at home," he says, "wondering what motor sport could do for society, how it could combine an important message with a bit of entertainment and the whole thing started to crystallise in my mind, probably a few years ago now. I like to think of myself as creative, but as you go through the journey of life you come up with all sorts of ideas that are never going to work. I have a bucketful of those, so it's nice that people grasped what Extreme E was all about and embraced it."

For several years, the French-born Brazilian has maintained a close friendship with Formula E's founding father Alejandro Agag. "I remember the cynicism when that started," he says, "and I felt it was a short-sighted way to look at things. People were asking whether it was going to threaten Formula 1 and I sat there thinking, 'That's not the question!' What I saw at the time was an opportunity to develop a fresh branch of the sport. Yes, it was different and didn't make much noise, but who cares? It was something new for anybody who loved motor sport and

could potentially touch a different fanbase. Alejandro created something really good from absolutely nothing - and not many people have the skills to do that.

"We usually meet up to eat whenever I'm in London. One day we were having a loose, brainstorm-type conversation over breakfast and I told him about this idea in my head, to visit remote parts of the planet facing environmental challenges that need highlighting and supporting, and to convey the message in an exciting way - something that combined adventure and competition with a sense of purpose. Alejandro loved the concept, ran with it and has done a tremendous job developing it way beyond anywhere I could possibly have imagined."

The upshot is a five-event inaugural series of X Prix, off-road races that will take place in Saudi Arabia (April 3-4), Senegal (May 29-30), Greenland (August 28-29), Brazil (October 23-24) and Argentina (December 11-12). There are 10 confirmed entrants and each will use an Odyssey 21 electric SUV produced by original Formula E chassis manufacturer Spark.

Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg have created teams for the series, as have Carlos Sainz Mk1 and Jenson Button (both of whom will also drive), while top-line American operations Ganassi and Andretti are likewise engaged, the latter in partnership with Wakefield-based United Autosports. Nine-times World Rally champion Sébastien Loeb has signed to race for Hamilton's X44 team,

alongside Dakar stage winner Cristina Gutiérrez. Teams must have two drivers - one male, one female, sharing the same car - and Agag has pledged not just to highlight environmental problems, but to try to do something about them (for instance, planting a million mangrove trees in Senegal to help filter water pollutants and combat coastal erosion).

All equipment will be freighted to racing events by sea on board the *St Helena*, a recommissioned former Royal Mail ship converted to run on low-sulphur marine diesel - known as 'champagne' in sea-going circles. Effectively Extreme E's floating paddock, it once served as the only link between the remote volcanic South Atlantic island with which it shares its name and the outside world, a situation that changed only in 2016, when Saint Helena got its first airport. During the vessel's refit, a laboratory was installed to allow a team of on-board scientists to pursue environmental research projects at and between locations.

Other high-profile names to commit to the series include Red Bull Racing's chief technical officer Adrian Newey and double Formula E champion Jean-Éric Vergne, two of six founding partners behind the Veloce Racing team.

"Having been involved with Formula E from the early days, I decided I'd like to get on board with this before it started," Vergne says. "If we want to make a difference to the environment, we have to look beyond cars because they are responsible for a very

"I was wondering what motor sport could do for society"

HORTONS

B O O K S



WE ARE OPEN!

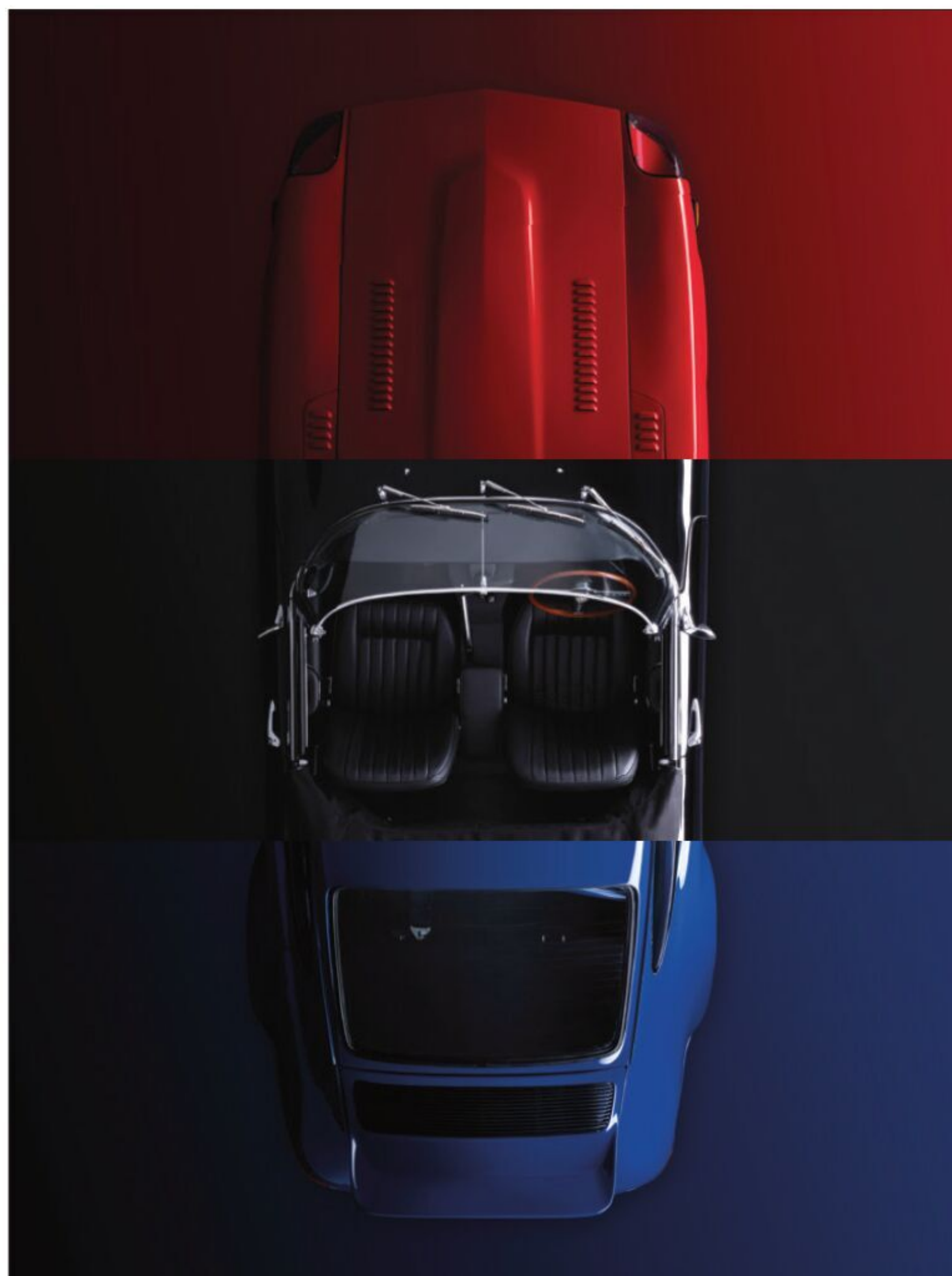
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1

1. The Anglo-American Andretti United team brings together powerhouses Andretti Autosport and United Autosports

2. Formula E champion Jean-Éric Vergne was an early supporter of Extreme E, but won't compete

3. The Saudi Arabia race highlights increased global water scarcity and desertification

4. Continental is the official tyre provider. There are two tyre types for the series: CrossContact Xtreme Winter and CrossContact Xtreme Summer. Sidewall colours were chosen to be seen at distance



2



3



4



"I was taught that you lose time sliding a car. This is the opposite"

small percentage of the harm that has been done. Many governments point a finger at cars, but through Extreme E we will have a chance to demonstrate some of the other things that really damage the climate.

"The ice sheet in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, has melted significantly in recent years and by racing there we will be able to explain what has happened through our digital media channels, which already have a big reach. It's important to explain what caused what and how we can change things together.

"I think the automotive industry has taken a step in the right direction to improve sustainability, with electric cars and other technologies, but we haven't yet found a perfect solution. Motor sport has always been an incubator for new ideas. Formula E has done a lot for electric motors and with Extreme E I think we can do even more, because it's not just about the racing. The locations will allow us to educate people."

Although he won't be racing in Extreme E, Vergne has driven the Odyssey 21 - during

a general test late last year, at Château de Lastours in southern France.

"Actually," he says, "my original intention was to compete, but we're doing this to win and I felt I wasn't the right guy for that due to my lack of experience with this type of thing. I would need to have done a lot of testing and with my Formula E commitments it would have been something of a compromise."

In his stead, Veloce has hired French all-rounder Stéphane Sarrazin to partner inaugural W Series - and former British GT4 - champion Jamie Chadwick.

"The first time I drove," Vergne adds, "I probably hit every single bank around the track. I grew up being taught that you lose time by sliding a car, even in the wet. The best laps I've done in the rain have been when the car was hardly sliding at all. This is the complete opposite.

"I was lost at first, but in my second session I was taught how to flick the car to turn - and all of a sudden I was able to complete a full lap without hitting anything" 🟢

Meet the Extreme E crews

Each team has a male-female partnership in a bold stance for equality

X44



Sébastien Loeb

The most successful WRC driver in history. Has contested five Dakar rallies.



Cristina Gutiérrez

The racing dentist. Became second woman to win a Dakar stage in 2021.

TEAM VELOCE RACING



Stéphane Sarrazin

Six podium finishes at the Le Mans 24 Hours and two Le Mans Series titles.



Jamie Chadwick

British GT4 champion 2015, inaugural W Series champion, Williams F1 test driver.

JBXE RACING



Jenson Button

1998 Formula Ford Festival winner, did some stuff in F1 also. You may know him...



Mikaela Åhlin-Kottulinsky

Two-time race winner in the TCR Scandinavian Touring Car Championship.

CHIP GANASSI RACING



Kyle LeDuc

Multiple off-road racing champion. Has won the American Pro-4 Short Course title six times.



Sara Price

Seasoned off-road racer who boasts titles in motocross and a medal at the X Games.

ACCIONA SAINZ



Carlos Sainz

Two-time World Rally champion who has contested 15 Dakar Rallies, winning four.



Laia Sanz

Thirteen-time winner of Women's Trial World Championship, 10 European titles.

ANDRETTI UNITED EXTREME E



Timmy Hansen

The 2019 World Rallycross champion and 10-time WRX event winner.



Catie Munnings

British rally driver with two European Ladies Trophy wins and a single WRC start.

ROSBERG XTREME RACING



Johan Kristoffersson

Two-time Scandinavian touring car champion, three-time World Rallycross champion.



Molly Taylor

The first and only female driver to win the Australian Rally Championship.

ABT CUPRA XE



Mattias Ekström

Two-time DTM champion who also boasts the 2016 World Rallycross title.



Claudia Hürtgen

Seasoned German racing driver with a GT2 class podium at Le Mans to her name.

HISPANO SUIZA XITE ENERGY



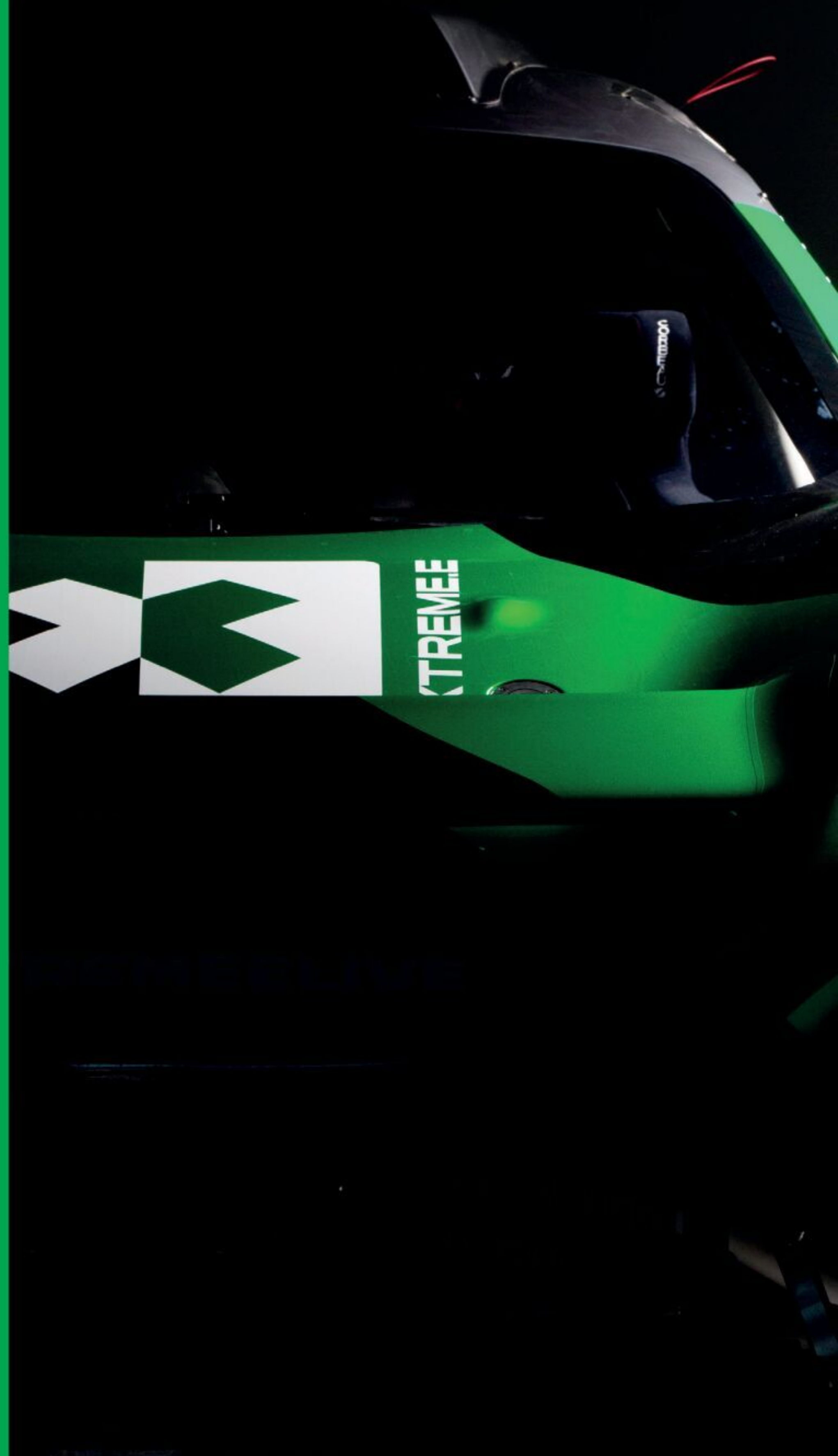
Oliver Bennett

A rallycross regular with appearances in both the British and World RX series.

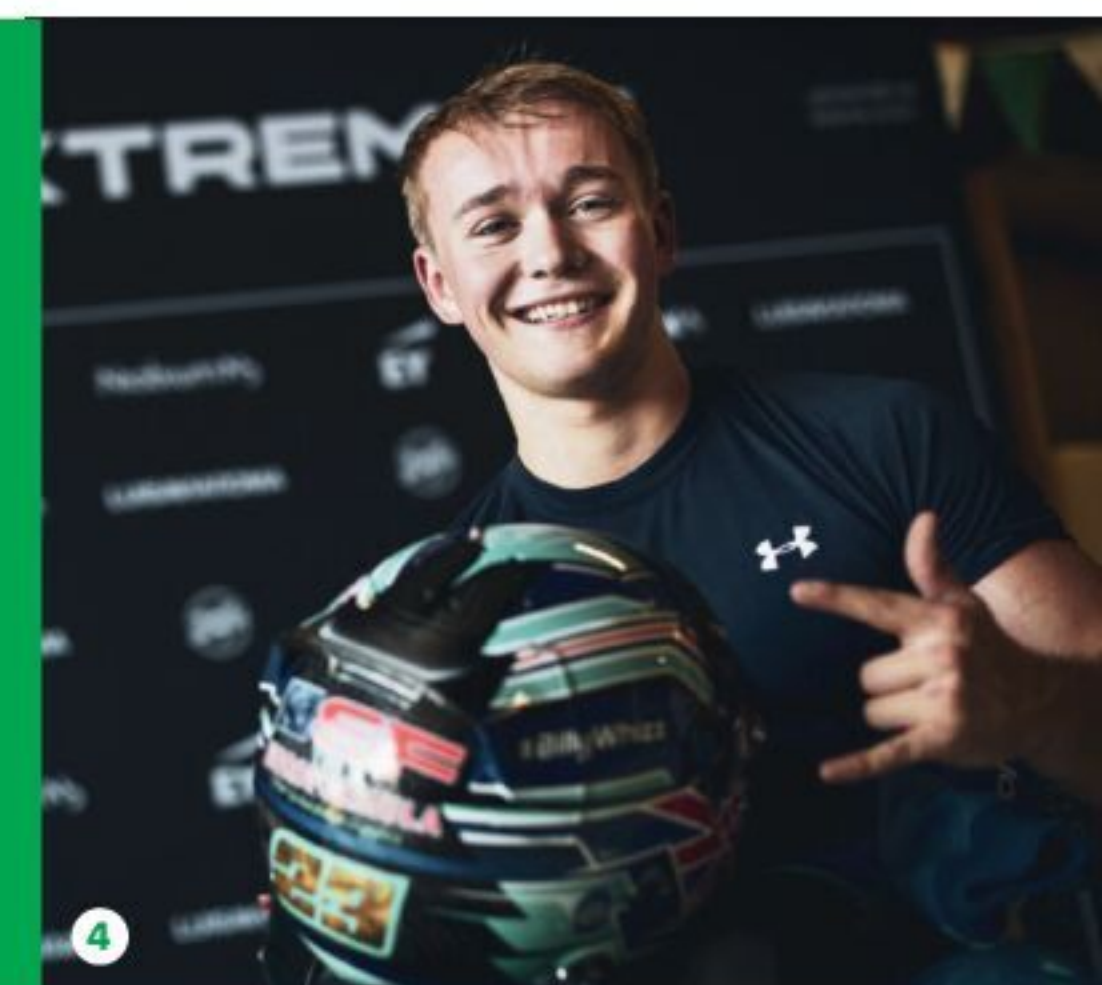


Christine Giampaoli Zonca

Canary Islands rally champion, 2014, then part of an all-female WRC effort in 2016.



1. The path of least resistance
2. The Odyssey 21 has already gone through some tough testing, including a cameo in the 2020 Dakar
3. Ken Block set third-fastest time on the Dakar powerstage in the car
4. Billy Monger is another driver to lend support, having joined the series' drivers' programme to test the Odyssey 21



“Extreme E is doing something – and the time is right for that”

and my times improved. You learn to dance with the car – a new feeling to me, but one I loved. The team knows I want to drive some more whenever we test...”

Veloce will be managed by Ian Davies, who has much experience in the World Rally Championship and rallycross but admits that he faces a steep learning curve. “One of the biggest challenges is that everything is new,” he says. “I’m 50 and have been in this business for 34 years, but have never seen anything like this.

“Everything is different – the rules, the regulations, the cars, the concept. If you’ve worked previously in single-seaters, rallycross or even on the Dakar, there is a set of existing rules that has been modified over generations. This has been built from the ground up with a blank sheet of paper. I suppose we are running what is effectively a four-wheel-drive Dakar buggy, but with electric power and a massive amount of technology behind it.

“I’ve burnt a lot of fossil fuel and rubber in the past 30-odd years and I think people see a need for change and want to put something back. I was looking to move away from rallycross after its shift to electrification seemed to have stalled, so I actively sought a

role within Extreme E because I felt it was the future. Also, Extreme E isn’t simply offsetting carbon. It is actually doing something – and I think the time is right for a gesture like that.

“When I went to the test in France last year, I was looking at the dust trails and listening to the tyres on the gravel. It never entered my head that the cars were a bit quiet. If there’s good racing on television and you turn down the sound, it doesn’t stop it being good racing.”

Other than those already mentioned, drivers committed to the cause include World Rallycross and DTM champion Matthias Ekström, motorcycle trials world champion Laia Sanz (confusingly partnered with Sainz), 2019 WRX winner Timmy Hansen, rising British rally star Catie Munnings and 2016 Australian rally champion Molly Taylor.

And Gil de Ferran? He has pledged to offer support, but won’t play an active role and will be watching with interest from his Florida home. “It’s partly an adventure, partly an environmental campaign and partly competitive,” he says. “The idea was to push a few different buttons, to see how we might be able to use the sport we love for a different purpose. I am hugely impressed by what has been done to make the concept a reality.”



ITV, BT Sport and Sky Sports will show Extreme E live, while the BBC will be streaming races



LATERAL

In 1994 the Penske Indycar team was unstoppable with its PC23, but to win that year's Indy 500 it devised a secret engine that took the competition by surprise. **Doug Nye** recalls the dominance of the Dorset-built destroyer





THINKING

“**T**O INNOVATE YOU MUST FIRST imagine” was an unusually constructed but typically to-the-point Colin Chapman saying. One of his great rivals over many years was the American racing driver, entrepreneur, team principal and similarly self-motivating Roger Penske.

As a well-wired driver of his own cars, Penske had imagined an innovative, lightweight

and effective car which would comply with contemporary 1962 regulations in US West Coast professional racing, but which would pack a winning performance advantage. The result was his centre-seated Cooper-Climax Zerex Special - based upon a Formula 1 Cooper T53 and so named after the antifreeze being marketed by the chemical company DuPont de Nemours that the Clevelander had skilfully massaged into sponsoring his racing.

Penske had already shown he could run with the best even before he appeared in the sleek little Zerex to spreadeagle all opposition in the big-time sports car classic at Riverside '62 - leaving Jim Hall's Chaparral, the UDT Lotus 19s of Masten Gregory and Innes Ireland, and Bruce McLaren's Cooper Monaco in his dust. He repeated that win in the following Fall-series race at Laguna Seca. His rivals nicknamed Roger's Zerex the 'FUBAR' - politely explained ►



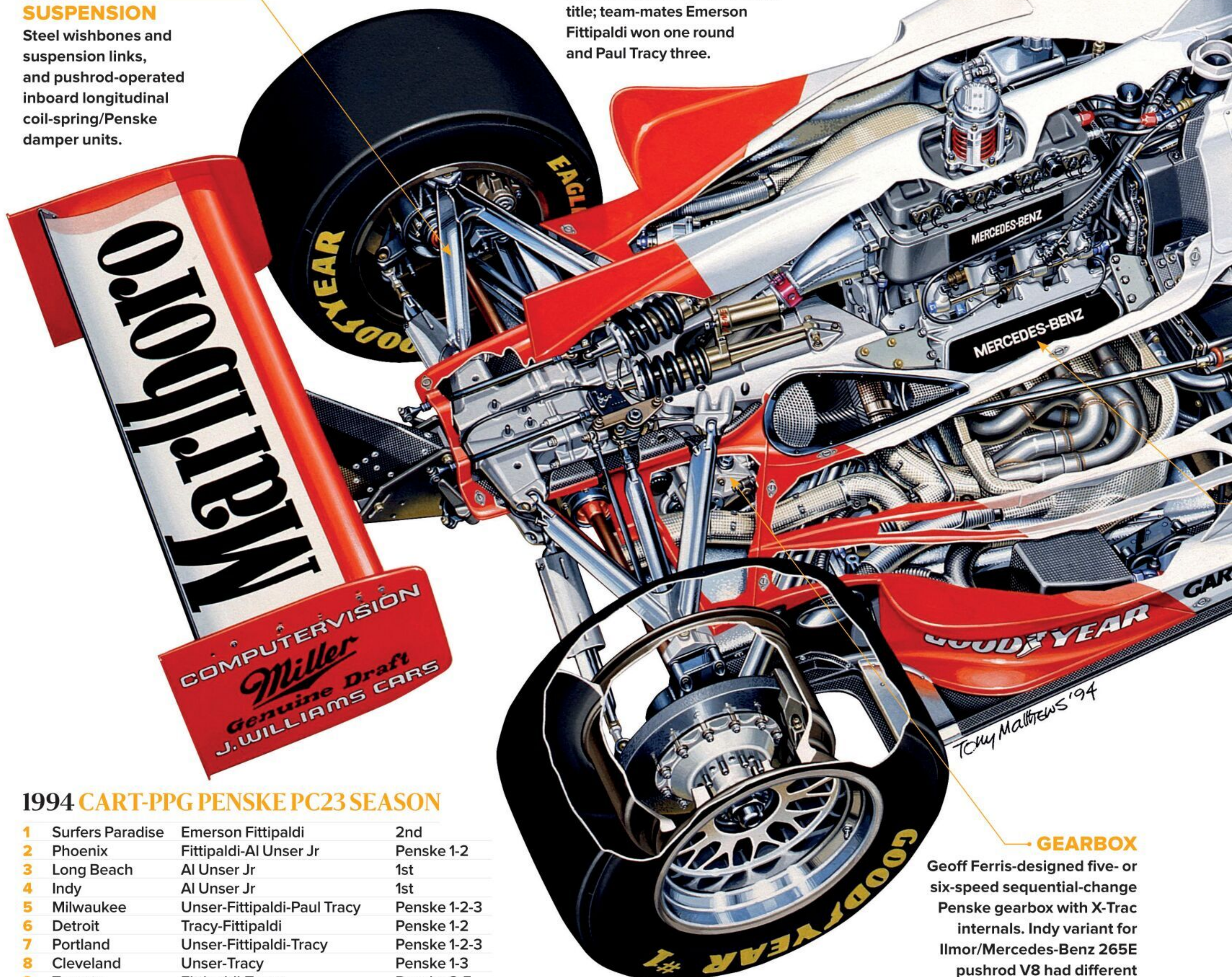
With over 1000bhp on tap, the built-in-secret **1994 Penske-Mercedes PC23** was intended for just one race – the Indy 500. Prompted by Mario Illien and Paul Morgan of Ilmor Engineering, backed by ever enterprising Roger Penske, Mercedes-Benz and Marlboro, this British-built beast hit 252mph on the Speedway's back straight and carried Al Unser Jr to his second Indy win...



Penske's Al Unser Jr won eight 1994 CART-PPG rounds and the Drivers' Championship title; team-mates Emerson Fittipaldi won one round and Paul Tracy three.

REAR SUSPENSION

Steel wishbones and suspension links, and pushrod-operated inboard longitudinal coil-spring/Penske damper units.



GEARBOX

Geoff Ferris-designed five- or six-speed sequential-change Penske gearbox with X-Trac internals. Indy variant for Ilmor/Mercedes-Benz 265E pushrod V8 had different input gears for lower revs but higher power and torque than CART Ilmor 265D V8 version, unit weights unchanged.

1994 CART-PPG PENSKE PC23 SEASON

1	Surfers Paradise	Emerson Fittipaldi	2nd
2	Phoenix	Fittipaldi-Al Unser Jr	Penske 1-2
3	Long Beach	Al Unser Jr	1st
4	Indy	Al Unser Jr	1st
5	Milwaukee	Unser-Fittipaldi-Paul Tracy	Penske 1-2-3
6	Detroit	Tracy-Fittipaldi	Penske 1-2
7	Portland	Unser-Fittipaldi-Tracy	Penske 1-2-3
8	Cleveland	Unser-Tracy	Penske 1-3
9	Toronto	Fittipaldi-Tracy	Penske 3-5
10	Michigan	Penske Team	DNFs
11	Lexington	Unser-Tracy-Fittipaldi	Penske 1-2-3
12	Loudon	Unser-Tracy-Fittipaldi	Penske 1-2-3
13	Vancouver	Al Unser Jr	1st
14	Elkhart Lake	Unser-Fittipaldi	Penske 2-3
15	Nazareth	Tracy-Unser-Fittipaldi	Penske 1-2-3
16	Monterey	Tracy-Fittipaldi	Penske 1-4

Five 1-2-3 results, two 1-2s.
1-2-3 finishes at Milwaukee, Portland, Lexington, Loudon and Nazareth.
1-2 finishes at Phoenix and Detroit

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase
115in/2921mm;
overall length
190in/4826mm.
Weight 1550lbs
(engine weight
273.4lbs).

FRONT SUSPENSION

Active suspension was considered for the PC23 but when CART banned such systems more conventional mechanical design prevailed, with regulation steel wishbones and pushrod-operated inboard longitudinal coil-spring/Penske damper units.

FORWARD MONOCOQUE TUB

Nigel Bennett design using a common moulded carbon composite and aluminium honeycomb monocoque tub as far back as the rear bulkhead. Indy PC23s had a different rear half, with 3.4-litre turbocharged Ilmor 265E 'Mercedes' pushrod V8 engine. Team PC23s for 15 of the 16-round CART-PPG series used a rear end housing 2.6-litre turbocharged Ilmor 265D V8.

BRAKES AND TYRES

Solid, unventilated
Alcon discs.
Goodyear Speedway
Special radial-ply:
25.5x9.5x15in fronts;
27x14.5x15in rears.

THE INDY ENGINE

3429cc – 97mm bore x 58mm stroke – turbocharged Mercedes-Benz-badged 500I 72-degree V8 pushrod unit. Two valves per cylinder – 1024bhp at 9800rpm, 557lbs/ft torque at 8000rpm. Unit required a taller PC23 engine cowl than that used on the 'standard' CART-racing sister cars with 2.6-litre Ilmor 82-degree V8 engines.



TONY MATTHEWS

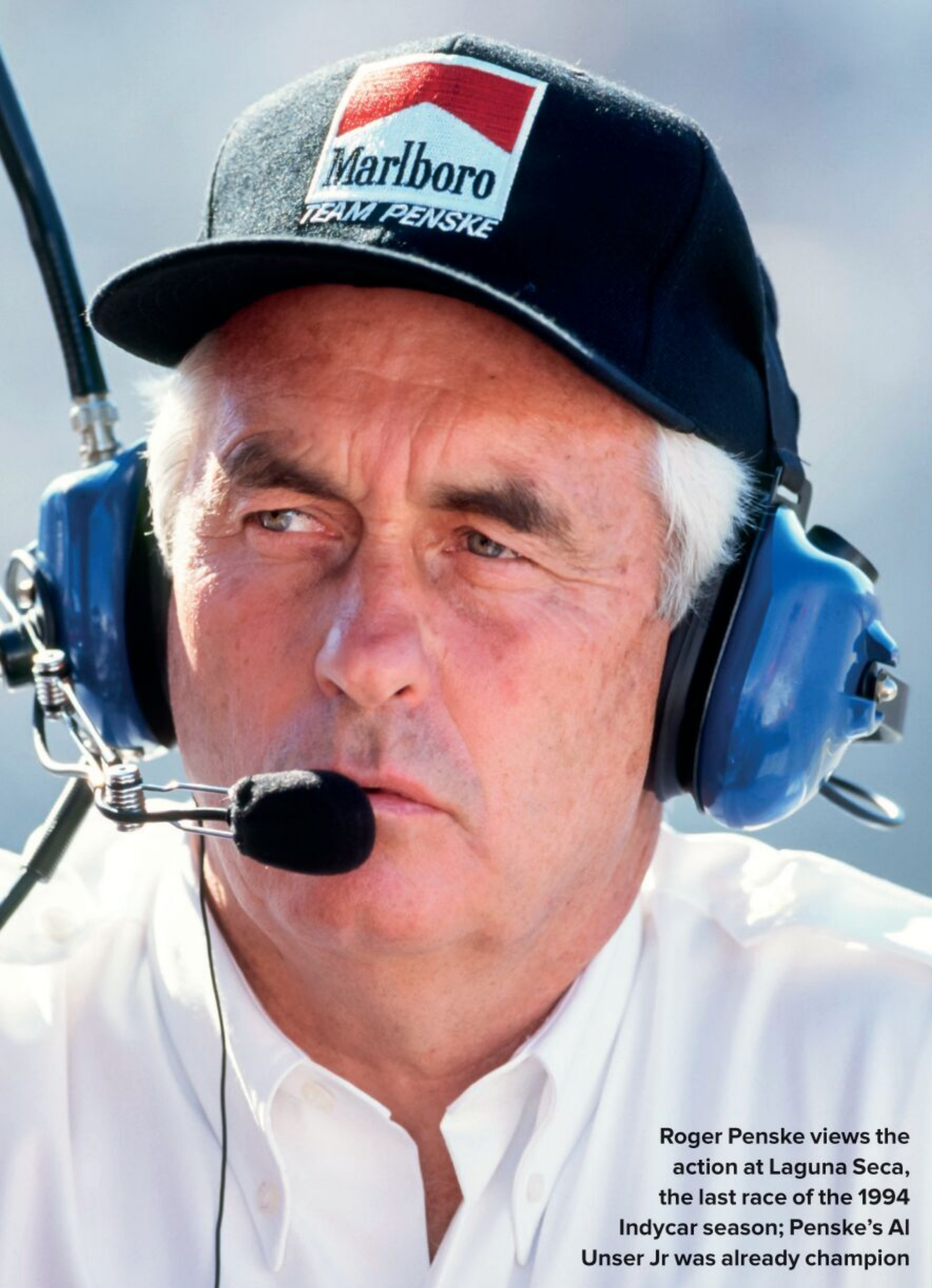
as meaning 'Fouled-Up Beyond All Recognition'. For 1963 rules were tightened and the Zerex reappeared as a conventionally-seated sports-racer, entered by the Mecom team, and Roger won some more, most notably in the Guards Trophy at Brands Hatch - although narrowly defeated in the Fall races by the new King Cobra-Ford V8s. He also made a brief Formula 1 appearance with a Lotus 24 in the US GP at Watkins Glen, finishing ninth.

As a driver, Roger retired in 1965 to concentrate on his Chevrolet dealership in Philadelphia. But in 1966 Penske Racing made its debut, running a Corvette Stingray in the Daytona 24 Hours. Mark Donohue became Penske's No 1 driver-cum-engineer. They dominated the Trans-Am Championship, taking the title for Chevrolet in 1968-69 and for AMC with the Javelin in 1971. Penske Racing also ran Donohue in CanAm, and made its 500 debut in 1969 - Mark winning the race in the Penske-McLaren in 1972 - and adding on a NASCAR campaign, scoring a first win there in 1973.

By that time another piece of Penske imagination-cum-innovation had put McLaren to the sword in Can-Am - George Follmer taking the 1972 title in Roger's new Porsche 917/10 Turbo. That programme had been assembled in secret with Porsche and after initial testing

behind the scenes at Weissach a revelatory US launch was imminent. But Penske's plans were ruined by a bloke named Nye, one of a press group invited to Weissach by Porsche Cars GB. We saw an exceedingly tatty hack Spyder being driven there by - wow - Mark Donohue. Porsche showed us the new turbo 917 engine on the test bed, revved it, and engineer Hans Mezger announced gravely, "Ein souzand horzpaht!" I wrote the story for *Autoweek* magazine in the US. When it hit the streets the Penske plan was outed. I heard Roger absolutely detonated. But nobody had told us we shouldn't report what we had been shown. Not my fault, guv'nor...

Penske still progressed from strength to strength. Roger's Formula 1 programme was riven by Mark Donohue's fatal crash at the Österreichring in 1975, then briefly buoyed by John Watson's win there in '76. All Penske cars were immaculately prepared and exquisitely well built. The Penske Ferrari 512M of 1971 was rated by Maranello's own Mauro Forghieri as the best Ferrari he'd ever seen... After Penske withdrew from Formula 1 in 1977 the team's British wing at Poole continued, building Indycars instead. An Indy win followed, with Rick Mears driving the Penske PC6 in 1979, using a new Ilmor-Chevrolet turbocharged engine. Penske then won the 500 with March chassis



Roger Penske views the action at Laguna Seca, the last race of the 1994 Indycar season; Penske's Al Unser Jr was already champion



This image and below: No 31 Al Unser Jr at 1994 season opener at Surfers Paradise



The Penske-Mercedes PC23 of Emerson Fittipaldi; staff at Penske, Ilmor and Mercedes worked under a shroud of secrecy



before their own cars triumphed again in 1988-89, 1991 and 1993. Meanwhile Ilmor-Chevrolet powered every 500 winner 1988-93 - six straight years; a double hat-trick.

Then it was for 1994 that the old Chapman-style Penske 'innovate, imagine' lateral thinking re-emerged. Triggering the notion were the Ilmor Engineering partners, Mario Illien and Paul Morgan, suppliers of the Chevy turbo speedway engine. In American Champ Car racing, two sanctioning bodies presided in uncomfortable parallel. The series' crown-jewel Indy 500 was still run by the United States Auto Club (USAC). Every other Championship-qualifying race was ruled by Championship Auto Racing Teams (CART). Their technical regulations differed slightly, and USAC had sought to widen potential entry to its race by permitting 'stock-block' production-based two-valve-per-cylinder pushrod engines to run against the purebred turbocharged racing engines from Cosworth and Ilmor-Chevrolet.

Several owners had opted for Buick V6s with production-based parts. From 1991, USAC allowed purpose-built pushrod engines on an equivalency formula, with both production-based and tailor-made pushrod engines allowed 209.3 (3429cc) cubic inch capacity, versus the purebred limit of 161.7CID (2649cc), and higher turbo boost, of 55in mercury, against the purebred limit of 45in.

"Penske Cars at Poole operated for 33 years and won 115 races"

Here was an opportunity which most constructors and engine manufacturers either missed, could not afford, or foolishly ignored. It wasn't a loophole in the regs but a gaping door which had 'Please Enter' written across it. Illien and Morgan ran the notion past Roger Penske, and the later months of 1993 brought a bespoke 209CID pushrod engine developed by Ilmor in Brixworth, Northamptonshire.

Penske Cars in Poole was headed by former MRD Brabham F1 mechanic Nick Goozée. He recalls: "It was surreal. We always started the design for the following season just after Indy, around June, and I'd sit with our designer Nigel Bennett, who'd usually have some clever ideas. The design and build programme would usually deliver two weeks before Christmas.

"On June 18, 1993, at the Toronto race, Roger called me into his motorhome for a meeting with Mario Illien and Paul Morgan of Ilmor. He introduced me to the proposed project to run a pushrod engine at Indy the

following year. I was asked if we could achieve it. With Roger the answer had to be 'yes' and worry about the consequences afterwards! Back home the only person I discussed it with was our designer Nigel Bennett.

"We had to build three standard cars plus enough parts to convert all three to the pushrod spec, plus two sets of spares for both options. Once the design was underway the factory was locked down and for four months it was compulsory for Penske Cars staff to work from 7am to 9pm, six days a week. We progressed the design of the standard PC23, and once complete I gathered all the Poole staff together and told them of the pushrod plan for Indy. The design office was out of bounds. We had to build three standard cars for '94 plus two pushrod cars, plus bits to assemble a third.

"I believe it took Ilmor's specific design team only 20 weeks from clean sheet of paper to first dyno run, Paul Tracy did the initial testing in secrecy at Nazareth Speedway, which Roger owned. There were reliability issues. The engine didn't complete 500 miles trouble-free until May 8, at Michigan. Near the end of its development Mercedes-Benz had stepped in with funding to have the engine badged with its name. Every Penske, Ilmor and Mercedes employee involved was sworn to secrecy. The fear was news leaking out and the boost bonus being lost in a last-minute rule change...

"At Penske in Reading, Pa, a separate race shop was created with four staff to strip and rebuild the engines and run them on Penske's own dyno overnight. At Poole we finished a car every three weeks. Our staff did a superb job."

The team launched the pushrod car to the public on the opening day of practice for the 500. Nick: "Two cars were at Indianapolis while the third was at Michigan being tested by Al Unser. For the first time since it was designed, on May 8 the engine ran for more than 500 miles and the decision was made to race it".

Nigel Bennett's Penske PC23 design was an evolution of its 500-winning predecessor, the 1993 PC22. While the Ilmor-Chevrolet CART variant had a low-level engine cover, the Indy Ilmor-Mercedes push-rod unit required a taller panel. Transmission changes accommodated the lower rpm-band, greater power and torque of the pushrod unit. The new 'Mercedes-Benz' 500I engine was slightly lighter than the 'normal' Ilmor Indy V8.

THE MONTH OF MAY AT INDY developed with the PC23s proving very fast, despite some engine unreliability and handling problems. Penske ran a three-car team for Al Unser Jr, Emerson Fittipaldi and Paul Tracy. Qualifying ended with Al on pole, Emerson third with Raul Boesel's Lola-Ford between them. Al's average speed was 228.011mph; Tracy qualified 28th. Nick: "During practice Emerson hit 252mph down the back straight where there were no speed cameras, but throttled back down the main straight in order not to reveal its true potential. Roger was afraid USAC could still ban it."

On raceday, despite stalling leaving the pits, Al Unser would win after he and Fittipaldi had led 98 of the first 100 laps, 23 to Al, 75 to the Brazilian. Paul Tracy was out of luck, his car's turbocharger failing after 92 laps. Emerson was able to pull away into a commanding lead, lapping at 220.68mph 121st time round, only to lose out when a discarded plastic bag blew into a radiator intake, requiring removal. Unser led but Fittipaldi hunted him down and by lap 157 these Penske-Mercedes twins were the only two on the lead lap. With 20 laps to run Emerson - who needed a splash-and-dash fuel stop to reach the finish - lapped team-mate Unser, who looked set to finish non-stop.

But on lap 183 Al unlapped himself. On lap 185 he led Emerson narrowly into Turn 4. The Brazilian was in dirty air, he said he tagged the inside kerb, but replays showed him drift wide onto the marbles and into the wall. His race was over. Al Unser Jr tore on, completing the final laps under a yellow flag to win his second Indy 500 and Penske Racing's 10th. Only one other driver completed the full 200-lap distance - rookie Jacques Villeneuve in the Forsythe/Green team's Reynard-Cosworth XB.

The Ilmor-Chevrolet engined Penske PC23s went on to win 11 more of the CART-PPG Championship series races that year, and drivers Unser, Fittipaldi and Tracy finished 1-2-3 at the top of the championship table.

Roger Penske is, at 84, arguably the most successful man from world-class motor sport - Mr E included. Penske Cars at Poole operated for 33 years, won 115 races, 11 championships and 13 Indy 500s. Today's Penske business empire spans a tremendous enterprise range, with more than 60,000 employees worldwide. Yet an enduring jewel in the Penske crown is the one-race Mercedes-Benz (by Ilmor)-engined PC23. But there is a sting in the tail. The power of that engine masked set-up shortcomings at Indy which tripped the team on its return in 1995 with the PC24. And it failed to qualify; hero to zero in 12 fleeting months. Another of frontline motor racing's cautionary tales. ●

Only in the UK



HAVE you ever been to a race meeting hosted by the Vintage Sports Car Club? If not, you are seriously missing out.

The Vintage Sports Car Club invented the historic race meeting; The VSCC held the first motorsport event after the second world war when 12-15,000 people flocked to the Elstree Speed Trials. It was the Frazer Nash section of the V.S.C.C. that held the first race at Silverstone, called the Mutton Grand-Prix, enjoyed by all except the sheep that were run over during the race.

Since 1934 the V.S.C.C. has provided a playground for old cars, of all sorts, be they fantastic straight 8 supercharged Grand Prix cars such as a Bugatti 35B, the humble Austin 7, an opulent Rolls Royce Silver Ghost or a light weight GN hill climb special built in a garden shed displaying its exposed valve gears on an air-cooled V-Twin engine. But what makes a V.S.C.C. event extraordinary is that the drivers of this remarkable and historic machinery are happy to talk to anyone who shows an interest. A VSCC event does not promote the hierarchy feeling where the drivers are aloof; we are all in the paddock together to



race our cars and provide a spectacle for people who want to come along and share our passion for the beginnings of autosport.

VSCC race meetings have a friendly, clubby feel. Many people camp at the race track, as part of the fun. There is a community within the club that has something for everyone, be it racing your car, helping fettle and race prep a car, join the buoyant, jovial crew of volunteer marshals or just sit on a grassy bank with a picnic and watch the most extraordinary range of historic machinery race by.

The paddock offers the unique opportunity to get up close and personal with these fabulous vehicles. You will often find a car undergoing a major rebuild between races. Part of the joy of pre-war cars is you can fix them yourself. For a spectator with an interest in engineering, the fascination of the way cars used to work is endless. Many of the VSCC race meetings and hill climbs have a unique, localized, classic and vintage tyre-fitting service, with Longstone

Tyres in residence, providing the opportunity to see a range of classic tyres in the flesh, and having a tyre fitting service at a race track near you. Where else can you get your wire wheels balanced? Added to that there's often a Concourse de Elegance displaying some of the most beautiful pre-war cars and an auto solo driving test where you can get close to the cars in action.

A lot of these vintage cars will drive to the race meeting, compete in the races, and then drive home again afterwards. The same car may compete in other speed events the VSCC organizes such as Hill Climbs and sprints and other events that are not about speed. The VSCC also hosts Rallies, both competitive and country-side tours, driving tests, off road vintage trials, and the VSCC club house holds one of the most complete libraries about historic cars.



PHOTO: Liz Crawley



PHOTO: JamieBubb.com



PHOTO: Chris Dicken



PHOTO: Mick Herring



PHOTO: Liz Crawley

What other racing club is so pro-active in the furtherment of motorsport that it offers half price race entries to under 30 year old enthusiasts, who are borrowing Grandad's car to get out on the track, and learn about the history of our machinery, how to use it, and most importantly how to fix it? A VSCC race meeting can be the antidote for the internet. Get your children off Grand Theft Auto and get them into the real world and on the tarmac at Silverstone.

The VSCC race meetings of 2021 are not just for pre-war cars. They also feature occasional grids from Formula 500 F3 single seaters, pre 1961 racing cars, Edwardian cars, 'fifties sports car racing club, Formula Junior, Historic Grand Prix Cars association, Classic Ferrari, Historic Racing Drivers Club, Morgan Challenge, and this year Longstone Tyres plan to sponsor the first Light Car and Cycle Car race this century. Visit a VSCC race meeting at a track near you to enjoy the thrill of continuing historic motorsport across the UK.



PHOTO: JamieBubb.com

VSCC race and speed 2021

- **17th April** Spring start and auto solo Silverstone
- **2nd May** Curborough sprint
- **5th June** Harewood hillclimb
- **19th June** Cadwell race meeting
- **4th July** Shelsley hillclimb
- **10th July** Oulton park race meet, auto solo and concours
- **7th/8th August** Prescott hillclimb
- **22nd August** Mallory park race meet
- **11th/12th September** Loton park hillclimb

Check website for any changes

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1972 Ferrari Dino 246 GT



Original **1 Owner** from New **UK Right Hand Drive** Ferrari Dino 246 GT in 'Concours' Condition. Rare Factory original 'Bianco Polo' with Black Seats & Red Carpets. Matching Engine/Gearbox & Body Numbers as confirmed by Ferrari and set apart from other vehicles by the presence of all the following totally untouched original components – Seats, Carpets, 'Mouse Hair' Dashboard, Headlining, Door Cards, Tool Kit (inc Jack, Chock & Bags) & Radiomobile 8-Track Stereo.

Light restoration by renowned Ferrari specialists Foskers in 2016 has brought it back to totally original cosmetic condition. Supplied by Sytner of Mapperley the vehicle comes with the original Bill of Sale, Wallet, Spare Parts Catalogue, Maintenance & Service Handbook & Radiomobile Instructions. Supplied with original two sets of Keys (inc Immobiliser fobs). Collection of 30+ MOT Certificates verify Mileage covered and also comes with a nice selection of colourful Tax Discs dating back to when new.

Covered just under *34,000 original miles*.

An 'Original' & truly Outstanding Example.

£499,995





THE SHOWROOM

BUYING, SELLING, AUCTIONS, MEMORABILIA



Running up that hill

Raced at the first Goodwood in 1948, this recently prepared Cooper-Vincent F2 is ready for the slopes, says **Simon de Burton**

AFTER ITS WAR-ENFORCED hiatus, motor racing was well and truly back on the agenda by the late 1940s - not least thanks to the Cooper Car Company set up by Charles Cooper and his son John at the family's small garage business in Surbiton, Surrey.

Cooper Sr had already built a couple of specials but it was the development of the

Cooper 500 Formula 3 car in 1947 that put his name well and truly on the motor sport map.

Since the Coopers had decided to base the car around a 500cc motorcycle engine, it seemed logical to mount it in the back where it was best placed to drive the rear wheels. The configuration established itself as the cars began to dominate in hillclimbs and on track, leading to a rush of orders from drivers such as Stirling Moss, Peter Collins and Jim Russell.

Also among Cooper's patrons was racing driver, wartime RAF pilot and HWM founder George Abecassis who in 1948 commissioned the remarkably original and historically important Cooper you see here.

Not only is it the first V-twin engined version, but it is very likely the only one to have originally been built using a 998cc Vincent engine instead of the more usual JAP units that followed. ►



The 998cc Vincent engine is engraved by its Australian designer Phil Irving



At the time, the mighty Vincent Black Shadow was the fastest thing on earth, so it would have been logical to use a Vincent engine to power a lightweight racing car – especially when the engine in question was the prototype for a new competition model called the Black Lightning, which offered 70bhp and a claimed top speed of 150mph.

The car's history file shows that the engine was supplied to Abecassis in 1948 and built into the first, stretched Mark IV Cooper chassis by Vincent engine designer Phil Irving (whose engraving remains on the crankcase) with the help of Cooper, the legendary race mechanic Alf Francis and Abecassis himself.

Cooper drove the car at the first Goodwood race meeting in September of that year, with Abecassis competing in it at the Easter meeting in April 1949. The files document the car's

subsequent and extensive race history, which includes an epic battle on the Isle of Man in which Abecassis eventually crashed, damaging the chassis in a determined attempt to out-do Moss's lap time (after which the car was fully repaired back at Cooper HQ).

The all-alloy bodywork is believed to be original, and the Cooper has recently been set up by the leading motor sport engineers and race preparation specialists Cameron.

It is configured for hillclimbing and it competed at the Bernina and Chateau Impney events several times, but can be adapted for circuit use. It is, as they say, 'ready to race'.

1948 COOPER-VINCENT F2

Offered by Neil Armstrong, Rugby, Warwickshire. Asking: £70,000.

Contact: narmstrong@in2tec.com

DEALER NEWS

Libyan tyrant's luxury coupé d'état

Deposed Libyan dictator **COLONEL GADDAFI** had his detractors but his appreciation of rare motors was exemplary. Before his regime was toppled, he ordered a **MAYBACH 57S XENATAC COUPÉ** but never got his hands on the heated steering wheel. It's on sale at **AUTO LEITNER** in Holland for £830,000.

Aston Martin new boy **SEBASTIAN VETTEL** has

put his F1 woes behind him by slimming down his car collection. His sell-off included five Ferraris.

TOM HARTLEY JNR dispatched a 1996 **F50**, a 2004 **ENZO**, a 2015 **458 SPECIALE**, a **LAFERRARI**, and **F12TDF** – both from 2016 – in just three days.

Surrey performance car specialist **ROMANS INTERNATIONAL** hasn't let a worldwide pandemic

thwart its plans. It is almost doubling its forecourt size after buying the Ford site next door. "Covid-19 ended up being the catalyst," said marketing manager Eddie Cumberland. "The Ford dealership vacated the premises and that gave us our perfect scenario." The new space will open in July.

Despite the Covid-enforced closure of its Shropshire showroom,

CLASSIC MOTOR CARS' restoration projects are continuing as normal. Work is underway on a 1961 **JAGUAR ZP PROJECT E-TYPE**, below, which was raced by Sir Gawaine Baillie in the 1960s. "It'll



take two years to finish," explained acquisition consultant Harry Wassell. "It's a very special car."

No bull, but **MARSHALL MOTOR GROUP** has gone for the treble with its sponsorship of darts pros **JOE 'THE ROCKSTAR' CULLEN**, **GERWYN 'THE ICEMAN' PRICE** and **SIMON 'THE WIZARD' WHITLOCK**. From April 12, it's game on!



OFFICIAL FERRARI DEALER

Meridien Modena

Ferrari 812 GTS – 2020 **£364,995**



Grigio Ferro Metallic with Nero and Cuoio Leather and Alcantara Interior, Nero Upper Dashboard, Cuoio Lower Dashboard, Nero Carpets, Nero Special Stitching, Nero Headlining, 20" Cerchi Forged Racing Diamond with Giallo Brake Callipers, Dual Climate Controlled Air Conditioning, ASR, Cruise Control. **500 miles**

Ferrari 488 Pista – 2020 **£304,995**



Azzuro California Exterior with Blu Scuro Alcantara and Cuoio Leather Interior, Blu Scuro Alcantara Dashboard and Carpets, Special Blu and Cuoio Special Stitching, Blu Scuro Headlining, 20" Forged Gold Rims with Blu Brake Callipers, Climate Controlled Air Conditioning, Large Carbon Fibre Racing Seats. **500 miles**

Ferrari 360 Challenge Stradale – 2003 **£199,995**



Argento Nurburgring Metallic with Rosso and Nero Alcantara Interior, Nero Dashboard, Nero Rubber Carpets, Rosso Stitching, 19" Challenge Rims with Rosso Brake Callipers, Horses Stitched on Headrest in Nero with Giallo Rev Counter. **20,000 miles**

Ferrari 430 Scuderia – 2008 **£189,995**



Nero DS with Nero Interior, Nero Dashboard, Nero Carpets and Stitching, 19" Forged Alloy Wheels with Giallo Brake Callipers, Climate Controlled Air Conditioning, MSP, Large Carbon Fibre Racing Seats, Horses Stitched on Headrest in Nero, Rev Counter in Giallo, Door Sill cover in Carbon. **9,000 miles**

Ferrari 458 Spider – 2014 **£159,995**



Rosso Corsa DS with Crema Leather Interior, Nero Dashboard, Rosso Carpets, Rosso Stitching, Alcantara Headlining in Nero, 20" Forged Dark Painted Rims with Giallo Brake Callipers, Climate Controlled Air Conditioning, Cruise Control, Full Electric Seats, Horses Stitched on Headrest in Rosso. **9,700 miles**

Ferrari 488 GTB – 2016 **£157,995**



Rosso Corsa with Nero Leather Interior, Nero Dashboard and Carpets, Rosso Special Stitching, Nero Headlining, 20" Forged Painted Rims with Giallo Brake Callipers, Climate Controlled Air Conditioning, Large Daytona Racing Seats. **6,300 miles**

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DB5 1965

Originally Goodwood Green with black Connolly hide trim and non-standard equipment of a heated rear screen and two Marchall fog lamps. This matching numbers car was purchased by a previous owner's father from a Mr Elwell in 1973, the Aston was next owned by his mother and remained in the family's possession for some 40+ years. The fastidious history file contains invoices from 1973 onwards and numerous MOT's. Having recently sold two DB5's with body off restorations for new owners, this car is next in line. The car will be restored to the ultimate RSW specification. A very exciting project for any potential purchaser to come on board at the start and enjoy the journey.



DB4 1961



Stunning DB4 in dark blue with red Connolly hide. Maintenance, service and restoration history from the past 45yrs. RS Williams maintained last 15yrs. Expenditure in excess of £100k including engine upgrade to 4.7ltr in 2010 – under 5,000 miles covered since. Superb in every aspect and ready to be enjoyed.

DB4 Series IV 1962



A magnificent DB4 Series IV benefitting from a complete RS Williams body-off restoration costing in excess of £350,000. Two year restoration from October 2017 completed in October 2019 with only 600 miles covered since. California Sage with Fawn interior. Original SS engine upgrade to 4.7ltr. Superb in every way.

DB5 1965



Fabulous DB5 in original Dubonnet and black Connolly hide (as per build-sheet) with lovely patina. Complete ownership history from new (8 owners). Maintenance, service and restoration history from the past 30yrs. RS Williams maintained last 19yrs. Expenditure in excess of £180k including engine upgrade to 4.2ltr in August 2002 (approx 29,000 miles ago).

DB5 1965



Superb DB5 benefiting from single family ownership for over 40 years. Original Goodwood Green with black Connolly hide. A fastidious history file with over 30 expired MOT's. Undergoing full body off restoration to our ultimate RSW specification. One of the finest DB5's in the world upon completion.

V8 Vantage Volante 1985



Green with Magnolia hide. Factory serviced from new until 1988 then RS Williams maintained since. 2 owners from new. Verified mileage of 31,900. Engine upgraded to 7.0ltr specification. 1 of only 2 pre-production manual Vantage Volantes built before the first official Vantage Volante was released. A very special car and stunning in every aspect.

V8 Vantage 1987



Chichester Blue with Parchment hide piped dark blue. Full history and MOT certificates from new. RS Williams maintained last 20+ years. A beautiful X-Pack with fastidious history. The 30th car produced and 1 of only 84 manual RHD cars.

£375,000

V8 7.0ltr 1979



A wonderful opportunity to purchase a V8 with several desirable upgrades. 7.0ltr engine upgrade in the late 90's and refreshed in 2011 at 41,454 miles – current mileage 43,496. 16' wheels, handling kit and Brembo brake conversion. Currently under-going full chassis repair and bare-metal respray – colour choice optional at this stage.

V8 Volante 1979



Midnight Blue with magnolia hide piped blue. Blue mohair hood with grey 'West of England' headlining. Full mechanical rebuild by RS Williams to 7.0ltr automatic specification to include conversion to 4 speed automatic. Work completed in August 2016 and only 1152 miles covered since. Total rebuild in excess of £210,000.

DB7 Zagato 2004



Mercury Grey with Charcoal interior – 1 of only 4 RHD cars produced with this combination. One of only 99 cars produced in total. 14,300 miles from new. Full Aston Martin Heritage approved service history from new. 5.9 litre V12 delivering 435bhp capable of around 190 mph and 0-60 mph in comfortably under 5 seconds.

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Protech House, Copse Road, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 2TW

This Series II Rapier, made from 1958-59, had a 1.5-litre engine enticingly referred to as the 'Rallymaster'



AUCTION HERO

Back to my Rootes

Looking forward to the return of historic rallies but behind schedule on a renovation? **Simon de Burton** has just the thing

IF YOU HAVE REGRETS ABOUT FAILING TO tackle a project during lockdown and are now fretting about having nothing to drive when we get the green light to return to the cut and thrust of historic rallying, this competition-ready Sunbeam Rapier could well be worth a bid.

The Rapier was Rootes Group's racy coupé that first appeared in 1955 having been inspired by American Studebakers. The first versions had unsporting column gear shifts, but that didn't stop British rally driver and Rootes Group dealer Peter Harper taking one to a respectable fifth place in the 1958 Monte Carlo Rally.

Knowledge gained from such competition led to improvements on the Series II Rapier (launched the same year) that included a floor-change transmission, bigger front brakes, more precise steering and, best of all, an upgraded, 1500cc engine that pushed out 73bhp and gave the car a top speed of more than 90mph.

Dating from 1959, the Rapier on offer is a Mark II that has been prepared with care and consideration - a fact evinced by its eight finishes in the gruelling Monte-Carlo Historique.

Fully restored in 2019, it appears to be the turnkey solution for anyone lacking the time,

inclination, skill or budget to source a standard car with a view to preparing it for competition.

The electrics - often a bugbear on hard-driven competition cars - have been neatly and logically sorted, Brantz rally meters have been installed and the sports seats are comfortable enough for long-range driving. The rear bench has also been left in place, as have the trim panels and winding mechanisms for the rear windows (good for ventilation).

The exterior has been de-bumpered and fitted with spotlights, the obligatory towing eyes, a bonnet-mounted stone deflector and some beefy-looking steel wheels. Two spares are stowed securely in the boot, along with the stainless steel fuel cell, twin pumps and battery.

Although there is slight evidence of surface rust here and there, the car looks thoroughly sound. It's even worth a look if you don't want to go rallying but just fancy a well-put-together, cool-looking classic for daily driving. But I won't say anything about cutting a dash in town - you've had enough Rapier wit for now. Just bid.

1959 Sunbeam Rapier. On sale at Historics, Ascot Racecourse, Berkshire. April 17. Estimate: £13,000-£17,000. historics.co.uk

FORTHCOMING SALE HIGHLIGHTS

● **BONHAMS, LOS ANGELES, APRIL 10**

Bonhams has dubbed this sale Supercars on Sunset and it focuses on contemporary collector cars. Included in the line-up is a special order Porsche GT3 RS built for comedian Jerry Seinfeld (and fitted with options costing £180,000), and one of just three Saleen S7-LMs in existence.

● **HAMPSON AUCTIONS, THORNTON MANOR, WIRRAL, APRIL 28**

Newcomer Hampson hopes to make this a 'live, buyer-attended auction', Covid restrictions permitting. A varied selection of lots ranges from a 1973 Ford Escort RS1600 rally car to a 1955 Ford F100 pick-up truck.

● **MECUM, LAS VEGAS, APRIL 28-MAY 1**

This blockbuster motorcycle sale will feature an impressive 1,750 machines and take three days to conduct. Star lots include a 1940 Crocker 'Big Tank' Big Twin and a 1950 Vincent Black Lightning that was originally sold to Denmark - where it was used for sidecar dirt track racing.

● **RM SOTHEBY'S AMELIA ISLAND, FLORIDA, MAY 22**

This annual outing will likely be online-only and includes two single-seaters from the estate of the late Irish-American collector John Campion - a 2005 Lola B05/52 and a 1981 March 811 F1 - plus the 1983 March-Chevrolet 83G IMSA GTP car *Spirit of Miami* that Emerson Fittipaldi credits with starting his 'second career'.



AUCTION PICKS

Pace Bowler's big delivery

Simon de Burton finds a Landy original, a bargain Ferrari and Maradona's rare 911

2013 LAND ROVER DEFENDER 90 HARDTOP TD 'BOWLER CHALLENGE'

SOLD BY RM SOTHEBY'S FOR £30,620

This was the first Defender built for the Bowler Challenge one-make off-road series organised by Land Rover and Bowler. Chassis R01 was used as a development and publicity vehicle before being driven in events such as the 2016 Scottish Borders Hill Rally and the 2018 Hill Rally Championship. A Stage Two engine tune gave it 195bhp and it benefited from brake and suspension upgrades. It had covered fewer than 15,000 miles from new and was among seven Bowler Land Rovers sold by the firm's former director, Richard Hayward.



1955 STUDEBAKER COMMANDER

SOLD BY BONHAMS FOR £17,730

Recently rebuilt as a replica of the car driven to victory in the 2007 Carrera Panamericana. It runs a NASCAR-spec 5.7-litre Chevrolet V8 engine and has a proliferation of competition parts.



1978 FIAT 900T

SOLD BY RM SOTHEBY'S FOR £23,500

After being appointed the Ferrari importer for Benelux countries in 1952, racing driver Jacques Swaters' Garage Francorchamps became famous. This van served as a parts delivery vehicle.



1966 BRABHAM BT18B

SOLD BY COLLECTING CARS FOR £62,000

One of eight BT18Bs built, this was originally used as a test car. It was sold to Peter Parnell who campaigned it in South Africa and Zimbabwe, winning F2 championships in 1968 and '69.



1987 FERRARI 512 BBi

SOLD BY BONHAMS FOR £157,600

A few years ago this 512 BBi with 44,000 miles on the clock might have fetched in excess of £250,000. But even accounting for a softened market, this is a bargain. Well bought, sir/madam!



1993 ISDERA COMMENDATORE 112i

SOLD BY RM SOTHEBY'S FOR £961,000

This was the sole Commendatore made. It featured a 6-litre, V12 Mercedes engine that resulted in a top speed of 220mph. The single windscreen wiper was made for a Japanese bullet train. Mad.



1992 PORSCHE 911

SOLD BY BONHAMS FOR £413,000.

It was probably not God who raised a hand to secure this 964 Carrera 2 originally owned by Diego Maradona. One of just 1,200 convertibles built to similar specification.



1972 MGB SEBRING V8

SOLD BY THE MARKET FOR £20,300

With a tuned Rover V8 and distinctive Sebring bodywork, this is a great all-rounder that could provide a lot of fun as a trackday, hillclimb or rally car. Also good for popping to the shops.



THE INSIDE LINE

"It could be the right time for an industry code of conduct"

IT'S ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO ADMIT weakness from a position within an industry, but I'm sure it would be no great revelation if I state that classic car auctions as a whole haven't and don't always get a great press. Stories abound of poor descriptions, slow payments, manipulated bidding and other general Del Boy-isms. Some may be apocryphal but there's no doubt substance to some of them.

Then there's the usual suspects, up and running one day and disappearing into the middle distance with vendors' cars, money, etc, the next. Then, lo and behold, back within the week complete with an altered company name, but not held culpable for any of the above.

It's no wonder that some buyers and sellers would rather subject themselves to a barrage of tyre-kickers and time-wastrels in their search for a sale than darken the door of an auction house. And yet, in times of disruption, new business models often rise to the fore.

It's just a thought, and it may not be popular with all, but it could be that the time is right for an industry code of conduct. It's been mooted during my recent discussions with other trade members and noted industry watchers.

The following are working notes on what could be included. Many have been adapted from other auction bodies from around the world.

Auction houses should:

- Ensure that all communications with clients are fair, clear, timely and transparent.
- Refrain from exaggerating auction prospects in the hope of securing business.
- Provide a clear and public record of each auction completed.
- Be honest in company advertising.
- Guarantee that the bidding process is fair and refrain from house bidding in order to artificially inflate value.
- Ensure that there is a fair balance of both sellers' and buyers' rights.

- Abstain from making a profit on any extraneous client expenditures.
- Avoid deliberate arrangements in order to withhold relevant information from the public.
- Make buyers aware of there being no warranties or guarantees beyond what is written and communicated.
- To provide clearly written and legally binding agreements

THE AUCTION WORLD HAS ALWAYS, AND WILL always, be the domain of *caveat emptor*. But unless we are full and transparent in describing any product and service offered, then how can the 'buyer beware' of what they are getting into?

After all, consumer advice always recommends you do your research before choosing any service or a product. A code of conduct gives people a benchmark to check against, and a reason to walk if the service level drops during their consultations and interactions.

It's right there in the Fifty Shades of Auction Grey that disillusionment, distrust and disappointment are born, and an industry's image is besmirched. We have been in this situation for a relatively short period, but we have already witnessed the rise and fall of others.

Reputations that are won over years of hard exertion can be lost frighteningly quickly. Just a small drop in the quality of service does have a direct impact on results achieved. If, however, we can provide the right level of illumination by way of operating guidelines, something that all professionals agree to adhere to, then perhaps it would help to refresh, re-brand and re-set the sector's tarnished image.

And that would be good for everyone.

Tristan Judge is director and co-founder of The Market, the online auction platform for classic and collectible cars

"A drop in the quality of service has a direct impact on results achieved"



AUCTION FOCUS

Pullman's London gallery may currently be closed but online activity is keeping the firm buoyant

Objets de grand luxe

Lockdown has ravaged the high street, but high-end automobilia is riding out the storm. **Gordon Cruickshank** inspects the goods

While many businesses have been crippled by the pandemic, those which can trade online have been the lucky ones.

Even a high-end specialist in automobilia with a smart shop in London's St James's can surf the wave, as Simon Khachadourian of Pullman Gallery told me recently.

"We can't have visitors to the shop any more," he says, "so we've cranked up our online presence, re-done our website, and we produce our digital magazine more frequently now, which is a real lifeline."

If you haven't seen the *Pullman* magazine it's worth a look via their website. We're not talking old petrol cans; the firm specialises in memorabilia of the highest quality. Apart from the smoking requisites, militaria and aviation objects, the car offerings may cover original artwork by Crosby and Gamy, vintage trophies, fine tinplate models, bonnet mascots and unique one-off presentation pieces.



Simon lists some current favourites: "There's a silvered-bronze model of a W125 [inset], one of four given to Mercedes team drivers in 1937. Caracciola's and Lang's are accounted for, so this one is either Seaman's or von Brauchitsch's, and as it came from a lifelong friend of von Brauchitsch the provenance is pretty good. And there's a huge model in silver of Tim Birkin's works Blower Bentley."

These are not for the casual purchaser - the website's upper price bracket says "£25,000 and up". That's why a firm like this is able to ride the pandemic.

"We've always had items at the lower end," he says, "but those tended to be impulse purchases - passers-by dropping into the shop. But now we are finding we get more specialised

interest; people have more time to search for something specific. For that reason I've been concentrating on particular areas which not many other people are doing."

As a consequence he feels that lockdown hasn't hurt the business but it has shifted its character - lower volume but higher values. Also, as he points out, it can cost the same to ship a £1500 item as a £15,000 treasure. Nor has Brexit had a noticeable effect, even though most of their sales are overseas: "Our shippers deal with all the paperwork," he says cheerfully, "including the export licences." Yes, many of these items are so costly that they need this vital paperwork.

One thing that has been impossible lately is visiting auctions and other dealers to source new items. How does he find his stock in the time of Covid? "The power of the internet. I'm buying a lot blind but so far I haven't been disappointed. There is plenty out there, in the trade press, in auction catalogues, at other specialists; it just takes time to sort out the cream."

"What we are missing is the face-to-face interaction with our customers, building a relationship. But it will come back."

In a time of gloom it's encouraging to hear someone talking with such optimism.

"There's plenty out there. It just takes time to sort out the cream"



STEERABLE PETROL RACER

Very rare petrol-powered model of a single-seater Maserati by Italian manufacturer Domo. Dating from 1950 and 17in long, it features remote-control steering by pneumatic tube. Unusually, it remains complete with its original fitted wooden box and all accessories, including starting cradle on which you would place the car before cranking the starting handle to spin the glow-plug motor into life. £POA (but £12,000-£25,000).

ON SALE pullmangallery.com



DFV ENGINE MODEL

Anything made in limited editions has a cachet, while miniatures and models have their own appeal. So this scaled-down motor, created to commemorate the 100th world championship victory between 1967-77 for the all-conquering Cosworth DFV engine, scores doubly. Presented by Cosworth founder Keith Duckworth, with his etched signature, it is number 48. Mounted on wooden 10x10cm base, with Perspex case. £POA.

ON SALE vintagemotoring-uk.com



GERRY MARSHALL TROPHIES

Lauded for winning some 625 races, Gerry Marshall was one of the larger-than-life figures of British racing. Some of his most memorable runs came in Baby Bertha, the special saloon Vauxhall, and this lot from Silverstone Auctions' Race Retro online sale comprises trophies he won with that droop-snoot monster, possibly the fastest special saloon ever. There are many other Marshall items in the sale too, due on March 27.

ON SALE silverstoneauctions.com



ASTON MARTIN MODEL

There probably isn't a reader of this magazine without a few car models around the house, and this one would make an impact. Scratch-built in 1:8 scale by Javan Smith, it's one of the DBR2s which contested races with the prototype DB4 engine. Car 1 took the *Daily Express* trophy in 1957. With fully detailed cockpit and mounted on a Perspex plinth, it sold for £3570 in Bonhams' March online sale.

SOLD bonhams.com

THE EXPERT VIEW



Keep a lid on it

WHEN IT COMES TO DRIVER-related collectibles, there's no area of the market at the moment booming quite crash helmets. A driver's crash helmet is their most personal and trusted possession.

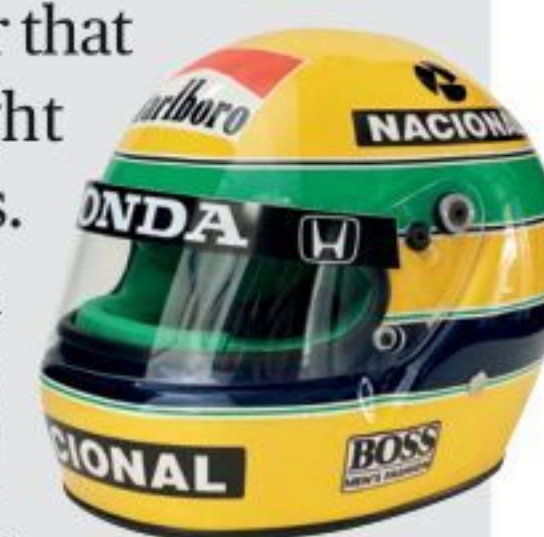
Demand for originals and replicas is on the rise. Items from drivers like Ayrton Senna, Nigel Mansell and Michael Schumacher are soaring because the fans who want such items grew up watching their heroes.

Provenance is key. A race-used helmet will be worth more, and the ultimate is to find one signed by a world champion. If you can get a race-used Alain Prost helmet, for example, you would pay £10,000-£30,000 at the moment. While that's a lot of money, Prost probably only had a handful of helmets per season. As investments go, they're pretty solid.

Then there's the more classic helmets. I recently went to see Tony Brooks, who amazingly only had two helmets his entire career. He showed me his current one and was bowled over when I advised him to insure it for £100,000. He never imagined it would be anywhere near that value, but to the right collector it's near priceless.

Replica helmets are a big market. Many brands like Arai, Schubert and Bell make full- or half-scale replicas, often in very limited numbers. A few are produced by the original painters - people like Sid Mosca, who painted all of Senna's helmets (above). Something created by him in the same way as an original has extra sparkle.

There's also a boom in half-scale ones as fans love to collect their favourite driver or team, take them to the track and get them signed. The right signature at the right time makes all the difference.



Andrew Francis is director at The Signature Store. thesignaturestore.co.uk



MY PRIZED POSSESSION



TOUCH OF GLASS

PETER DUMBRECK, NÜRBURGRING MASTER

"I've picked my trophy from the 2015 Nürburgring 24 Hours and the matching Tamiya Porsche that sit side by side in my office. I've had a special relationship with the Nordschleife and Porsche. A podium was a huge aspiration for the Falken Motorsport team I drove for, and in 2015 a faultless run against the factory cars secured us third place. The trophy's made of glass and the team's PR used loads of hotel towels to make sure it didn't get damaged coming home. I was given the Tamiya model of the car by Falken. Shamefully it's a 'shelf queen' - I haven't used it in anger yet!"



THE SHOWROOM

Motor Sport collection



Editor's choice

You don't need an excuse...

It might not be your birthday or a special occasion, but there are plenty of must-haves at motorsportmagazine.com/shop

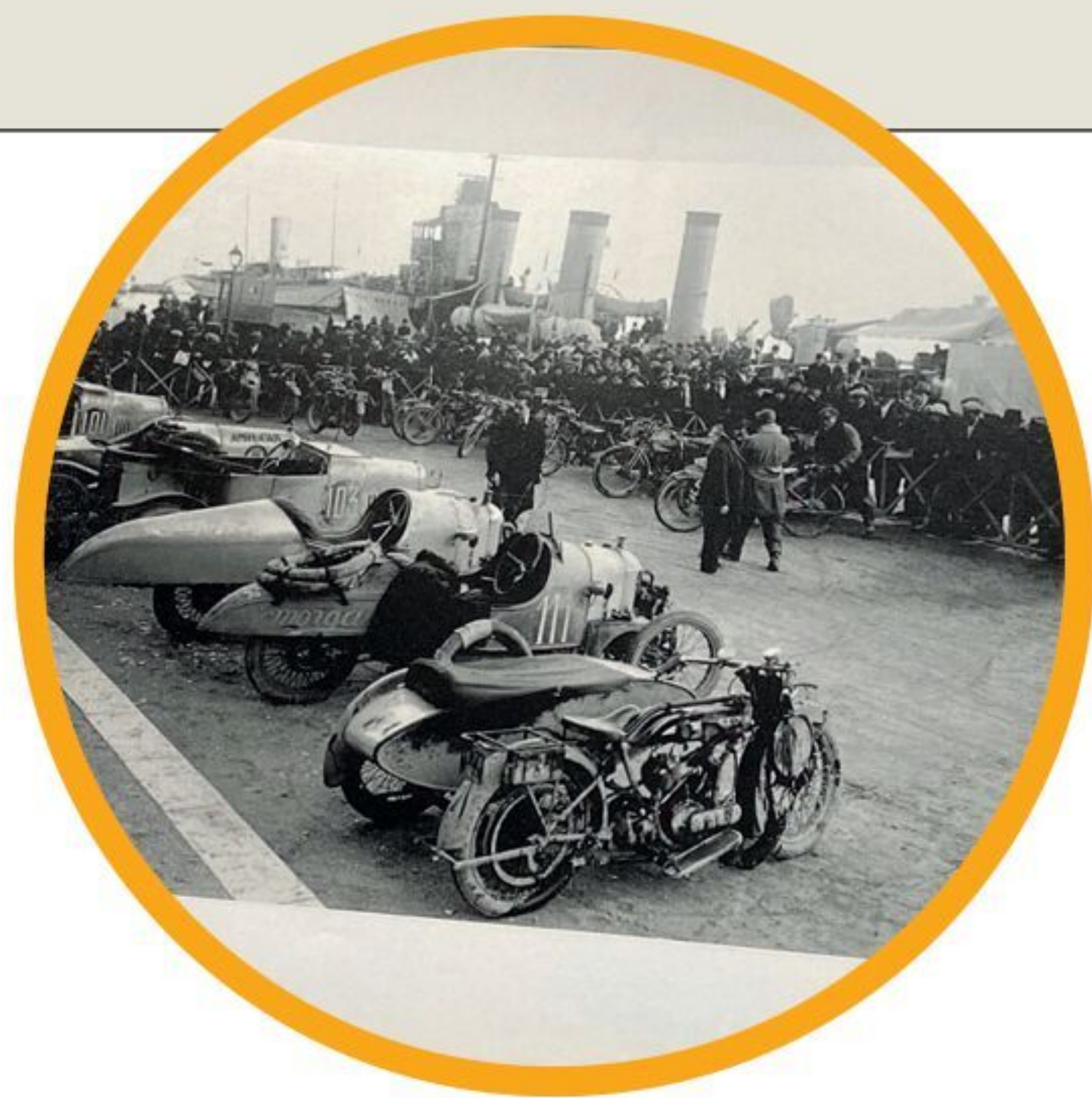
FULL-SCALE JENSON BUTTON REPLICA HELMET

As detailed elsewhere in this issue, replica crash helmets are in big demand at the moment, with lids from all eras of the sport becoming hugely collectible. Of recent times, there are few more distinctive designs than the one Jenson Button wore during that fairytale 2009 season, when he guided the ultimate underdog Brawn GP team to the world championship in its maiden, and only, Formula 1 season.

This is a 1:1-scale replica of the Bell helmet Button wore throughout that season, featuring the distinctive white, black and dayglo yellow colours that were so reminiscent of the team;

Brawn GP was so cash-strapped that the car was predominantly plain white for testing, making do with just a handful of coloured stickers which were gradually added to as the season went on. It emerged as the most unlikely of frontrunners.

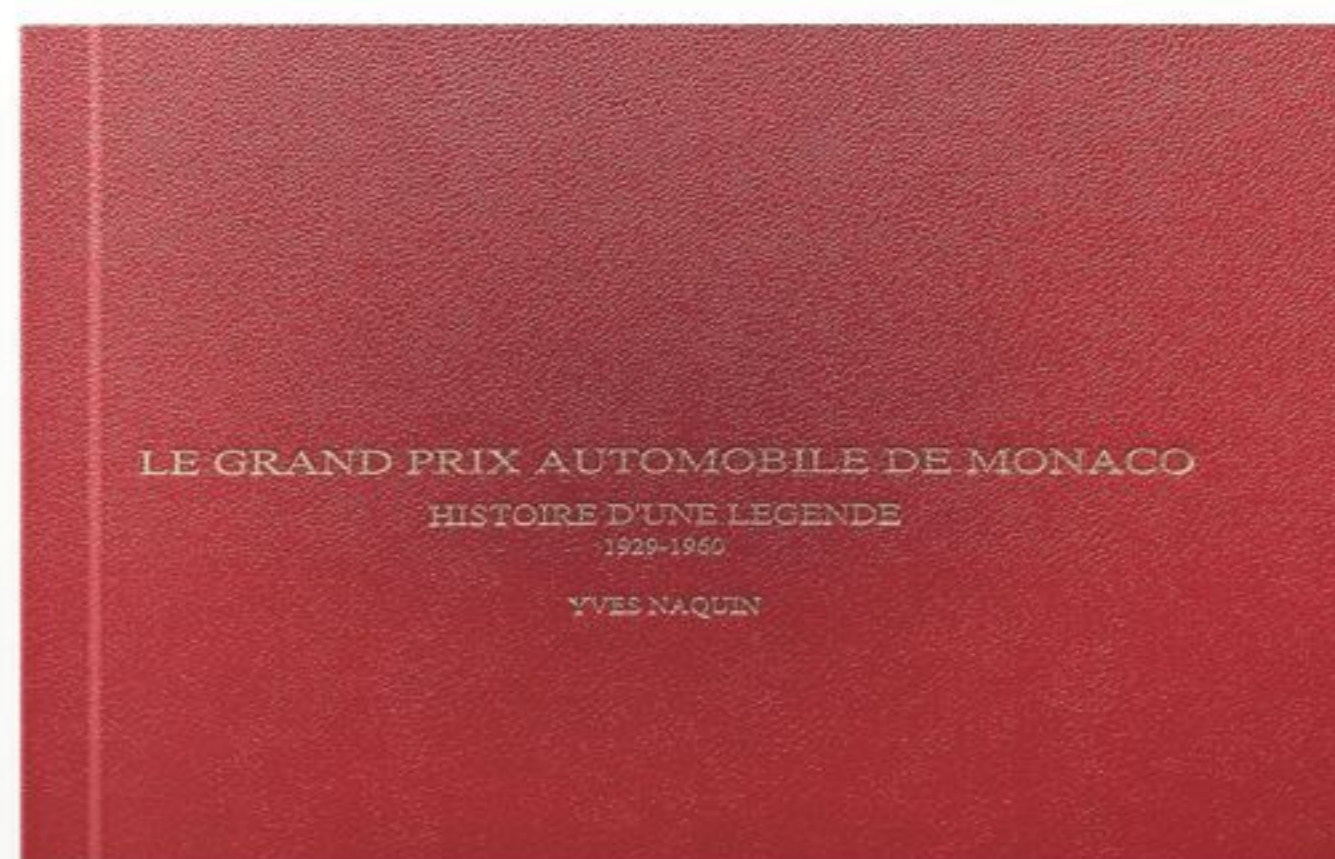
Button secured four poles and six wins from the opening seven races to put himself clear in the title chase before others caught up with Brawn's innovative double-deck diffuser. But by then it was too late, and Button secured a dream world title. This item is a signature away from being a potentially great investment. £995



HISTORY OF THE MONACO GRAND PRIX, 'PILOTES EDITION'

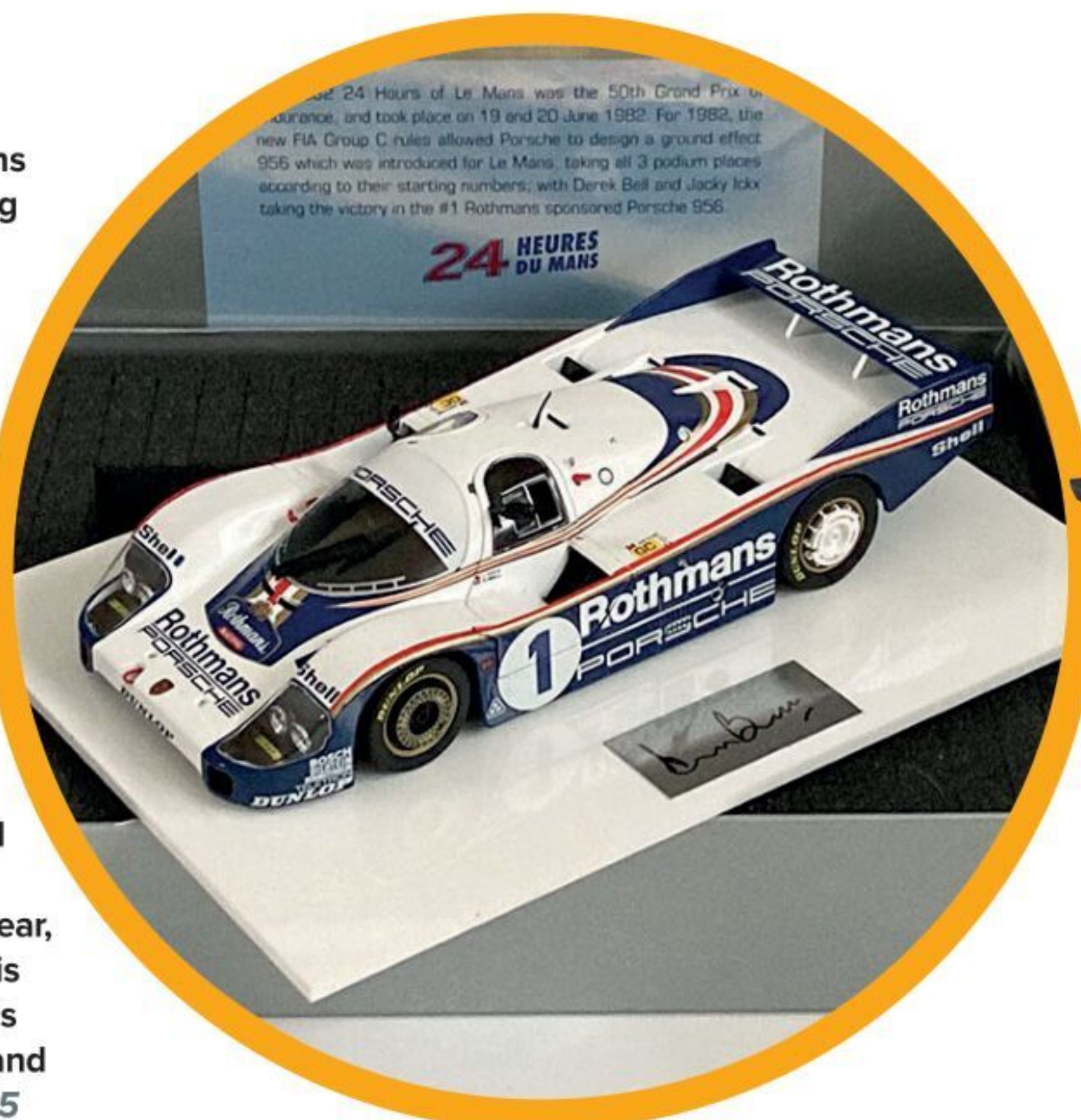
Our friends at Signature Store have a handy knack for finding incredible rarities, and a stunning and hugely limited edition of the *Le Grand Prix Automobile de Monaco, 1929-1960* by Yves Naquin certainly qualifies as a gem. While the book itself isn't so rare, it is thought that there are only around a dozen examples like this one, which is un-numbered and stamped 'Exemplaire Pilotes', or Drivers' Edition.

These ultra-rare versions were given as gifts to drivers willing to contribute or sign various editions of the book, making any one with this stamp hugely collectible in itself. The book itself is stunning, A3 in size, 6kg, sitting almost 3in thick and with 600 pages of beautiful images and editorial supported by the private archives of Prince Rainier of Monaco. You have to read French to get the most from it, but it's a great addition for any collector. **£1200**



DEREK BELL-SIGNED PORSCHE 956 MODEL

The dawn of an era of new regulations can often turn an established pecking order on its head, but in the case of Group C it didn't. Porsche already had La Sarthe in its grip, having triumphed six times since its breakthrough with the 917 in 1970. When Group C arrived for 1982, the rules would go on to create a swathe of legendary sports cars as manufacturers were tempted back to take on Porsche. None properly managed to stop Stuttgart, mostly due to the success of the 956. Jacky Ickx and Derek Bell were fresh from their 1981 victory in the 936 when they were plugged into the 956 the following year, and nobody could get near them. This 1:18-scale model of the 1982 winner is mounted on a plinth, signed by Bell and comes in a presentation box. **£299.95**



WALERO BEANIE HAT

As far as current planning goes, spectator banks will (hopefully) get the go-ahead to reopen for sporting events across Europe this summer. And if you're a fan of British racing events in particular, then you'll know that it's handy to have a noggin-warmer nearby at all times – even in August. This snazzy beanie from Walero would fit the bill nicely, and features temperature regulating technology to keep your bonce from burning should the sun decide to put in a rare appearance now and then. **£28**

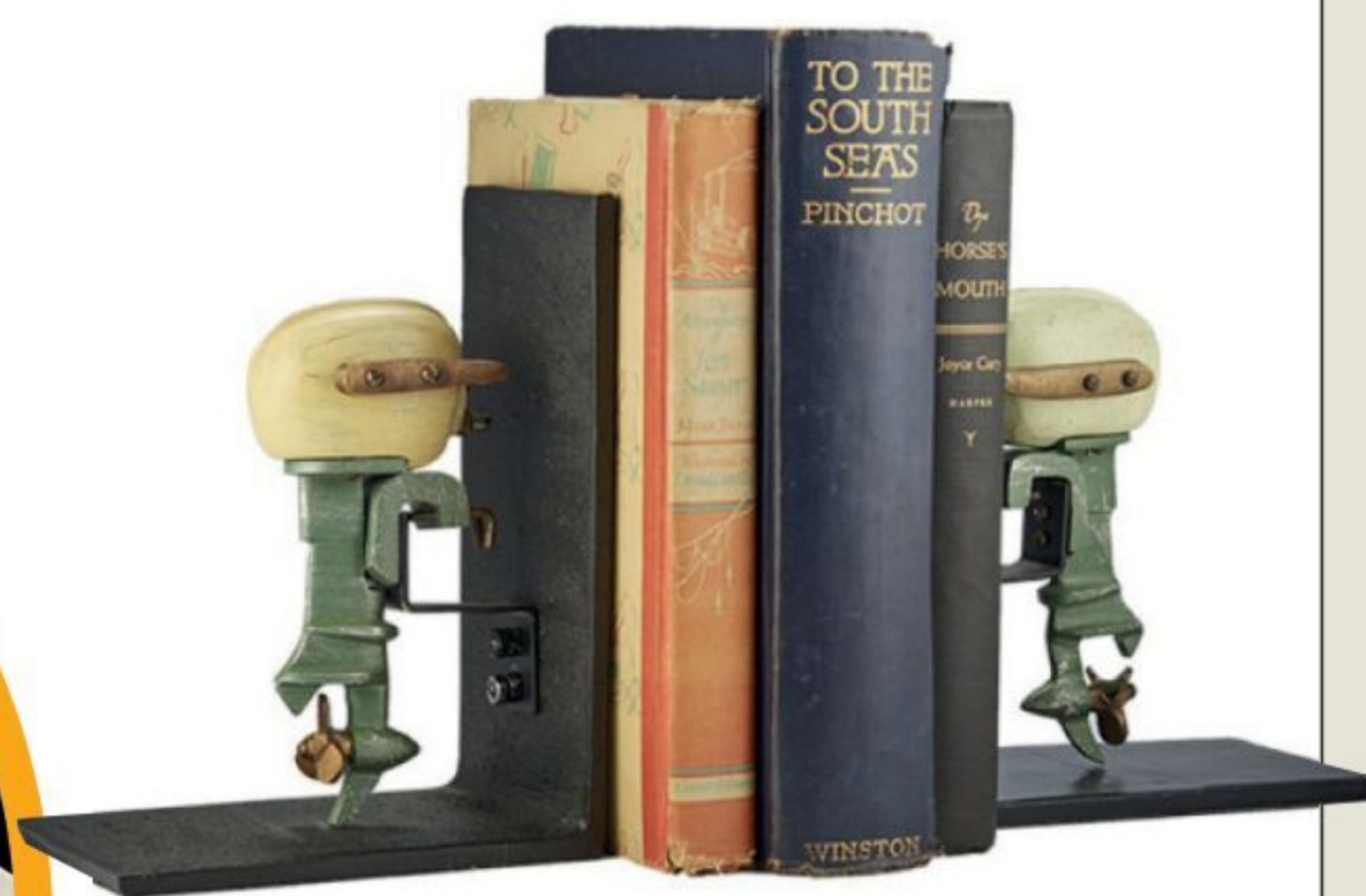


AUTOMOBILIST BURN AND CRASH ART PRINT

Automobilist's latest release of fine art prints is well worth a peruse, and if you like your pictures to feature serious drama mixed with political overtones, then try this one depicting Manfred von Brauchitsch being pulled from his flaming Mercedes during the 1938 German Grand Prix. On the eve of war, the prospect of a 'Britisher' winning in the Fatherland was unthinkable, but it became reality when von Brauchitsch's works Mercedes W154 combusted in the pits, prompting team manager Alfred Neubauer to drag him from the blaze. Von Brauchitsch re-entered the race, but crashed soon after, handing victory to Richard 'Dick' Seaman in his Mercedes. Cue that fantastic shot of Seaman's half-mast salute to Hitler on the podium... **£189**

ABOUT THE MOTOR SPORT SHOP

With hundreds of special and unique racing-themed products, and many new items regularly added, the *Motor Sport* shop is aimed at both serious and casual collectors with a number of price points to suit your budget. Visit motorsportmagazine.com/shop



OUTBOARD MOTOR BOOKENDS

It's rare for us to feature something without wheels, but these do at least have an engine and steering, of sorts, plus they have a racing past. In the 1950s it was a popular pastime in Japan to create miniature racing boats, complete with fully working scaled-down outboard motors. These superb bookends are based around original motor designs of the time, crafted from aluminium, painted to look retro and then mounted to heavy cast-iron bases to hold on to your favourite books through even the choppiest of waters. **£160**



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The first of only ten GTR Longtail examples ever produced, road converted & UK registered with EU taxes paid.....£POA



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A UK supplied P1 with great provenance and only 353 miles from new, fitted with a host of MSO special features.....£POA



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A one owner, UK supplied example with impeccable service history from new, fitted with a host of factory options.....£POA



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- 1 of only 158 UK right-hand drive cars, of which only 13 were finished in Marrone Metallizzato
- Fresh from a total refurbishment by marque experts Cremonini Carrozzeria and Autofficina Bonini
- Very few owners from new and single ownership since 1991
- Optional extras include factory fitted air conditioning
- Displaying only 21,566 miles, which is believed to be the original mileage from new
- A truly exceptional car

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www.tomhartleyjnr.com





With only a single victory in its short career, Jaguar's XJR-11 could hardly be described as dominant – but it gave Sauber-Mercedes a fright

BUYING GUIDE

Jag's evolutionary link

Any Silk Cut Group C car is special. **Robert Ladbrook** looks at why the twin-turbo 3.5-litre XJR-11 changed the formula

JAGUAR XJR-11

- **Price new** N/A
- **Price now** £1m-£1.5m
- **Engine** 3.5-litre V64V twin-turbo V6
- **Rivals** Mercedes-Benz C9, Porsche 962C, Nissan R90
- **Verdict** It may not have been the most successful of the XJRs, but it was a showcase of innovation

SOMETIMES BIGGER DOESN'T MEAN better. That's the lesson ultimately learned with the Jaguar XJR-11. Tom Walkinshaw's recipe for sports car success was simple. Take world-class designers, put together an exceptional chassis and chuck a 7-litre V12 at the heart of it.

However, just after leading Jaguar back to the top step at Le Mans for the first time in over 30 years with the XJR-9LM, a sudden realisation came to Walkinshaw. The recipe was no longer working.

A glance down the World Sportscar Championship entry list told you why. Mercedes had a 5-litre turbo. Nissan a 3.5-litre turbo. Porsche a 3-litre turbo. Turbo, turbo, turbo, each one significantly smaller, lighter and nimbler than the Jag's hulking naturally aspirated V12.

While the under-stressed V12 still rang true for Le Mans, in order to succeed in the World Sportscar Championship, TWR

needed to downsize and get a blower. It did that with the XJR-11.

With a new engine needed, Walkinshaw went to Jag's old British Leyland stablemate MG Rover for the solution, adopting the 3.5-litre twin-turbocharged V64V which had been developed for the Metro 6R4. Reworked into a new all-aluminium unit, the final engine weighed 143kg as opposed to 308kg for the V12 and boasted between 650-750bhp after some TWR tuning and the fitting of twin Garrett turbochargers.

To go with the powertrain, Tony Southgate and Ross Brawn produced a new chassis for the XJR-11, evolving the fully carbon monocoque they had pioneered with the XJR-8/9 but compacting the design and including double wishbone pushrod suspension, and mounting the rear assembly outboard to free up extra space for ground-effect tunnels.

Two variants were made, one for IMSA in the US, which

featured a scaled-down 3-litre and codenamed XJR-10, and the full-blooded Group C version. After starting 1989 with the XJR-9, the XJR-11 came on-stream in the fourth round at Brands Hatch. Jan Lammers and Patrick Tambay made an immediate impression by putting the car on pole, but faded back to fifth in the race.

Indeed, the XJR-11 would have to wait until the following May at Silverstone for its first victory, when Martin Brundle and Alain Ferté ended Mercedes' eight-race winning streak. That was the XJR-11's highlight, as Mercedes picked up the pace to dominate the season. Regardless, the XJR-11 stands as the only car to defeat the Silver Arrows that year, often showing incredible speed, just not for quite long enough.

Knowing the fragility of the engine, TWR reverted to a V12 for Le Mans, further updating the XJR-9 chassis to create the XJR-12 that in 1990 recorded the team's second success at La Sarthe. The XJR-11 was retired after that, with TWR ditching the V64V in favour of Cosworth V8s for the XJR-14 of 1991. It may have had a short career, but the XJR-11 still stands as a key part of the Jaguar Group C story. ●



ONE FOR SALE

1989 JAGUAR XJR-11

With three built, you have to be fast to buy one.

In 1990, this was second at Spa and Silverstone.

£POA, dhroftgo.com



911 Carrera 4 GTS (991 GEN II)

GT Silver • Bordeaux Red Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox with Paddles • 20" Centre Lock Wheels Sport Chrono • Dynamic Chassis Rear Axle Steer • 4,722 miles 2018 (18)

£94,995



Cayman GT4 (718)

Racing Yellow • Black Half-Leather Bucket Seats • 20" GT4 Wheels Manual Gearbox • Clubsport Package • Porsche Carbon Ceramic Brakes • Switchable Sports Exhaust 914 miles • 2020 (20)

£92,995



911 Turbo S (991)

Basalt Black • Black Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox with Paddles Porsche Carbon Ceramic Brakes Touchscreen Satellite Navigation Sport Chrono • 16,271 miles 2015 (65)

£91,995



911 Carrera 4 GTS (991 GEN II)

GT Silver • Black Half-Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox with Paddles 20" Centre Lock Wheels • Switchable Sports Exhaust • Touchscreen Satellite Navigation • Rear Axle Steer • 23,028 miles • 2017 (17)

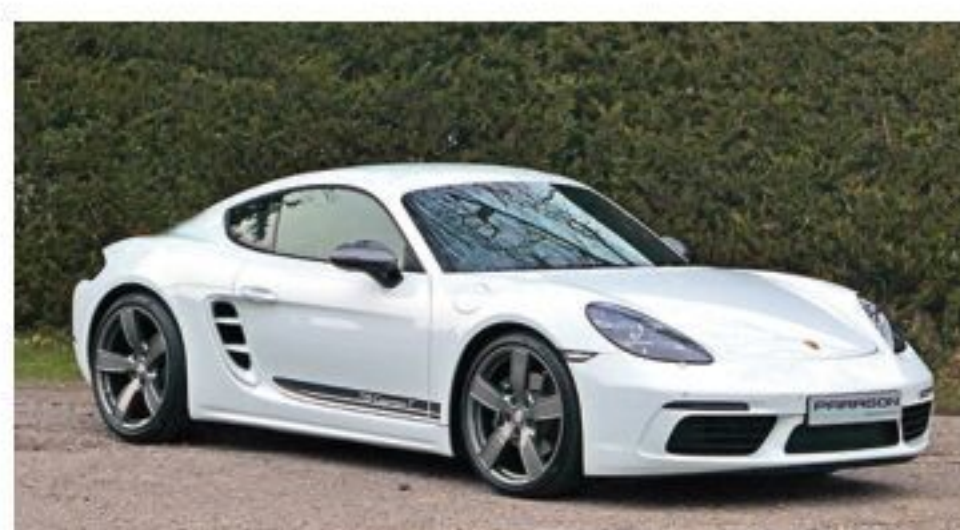
£79,995



911 Carrera 4 (993)

Arctic Silver • Classic Grey Leather Sports Seats • 285 BHP VarioRam Engine • Air Conditioning • 17" Cup Wheels • Manual Gearbox • Dark Blue Power Hood • 3rd High-Level Brake Light • 61,259 miles • 1997 (P)

£59,995



Cayman 718 T

Carrara White Metallic • Black 918 Bucket Seats • Manual Gearbox 20" Carrera Sport Wheels Switchable Sports Exhaust • Sport Chrono • Apple Car Play/Bluetooth Phone • 1,669 miles • 2019 (69)

£52,995



911 Carrera 2 (991)

Carrara White • Black Leather Seats PDK Gearbox • Touchscreen Satellite Navigation • Switchable Sports Exhaust • 20" Carrera S Wheels • Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon • 37,285 miles • 2012 (12)

£49,995



Boxster Spyder (987)

Jet Black • Black Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox with Paddles 19" Boxster Spyder Wheels • Full Leather Interior • Sport Chrono Air Conditioning • Heated Seats 14,528 miles • 2011 (11)

£44,995



911 Carrera 2 S (997 GEN II)

Arctic Silver • Black Leather Seats PDK Gearbox with Paddles 19" Carrera S II Wheels • Sport Chrono • Previously Supplied & Serviced by Paragon • 32,164 miles 2008 (08)

£42,995



Boxster Spyder (987)

Jet Black • Black Leather Sports Seats • Manual Gearbox • 19" Turbo II Wheels • Switchable Sports Exhaust • Heated Seats • Porsche Sound Pack Plus • 33,234 miles 2011 (61)

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911 Carrera 2 (997 GEN II)

Atlas Grey • Black Leather Seats Manual Gearbox • 19" Carrera Classic Wheels • Touchscreen Satellite Navigation • Sport Chrono Previously Supplied & Serviced by Paragon • 42,479 miles • 2010 (10)

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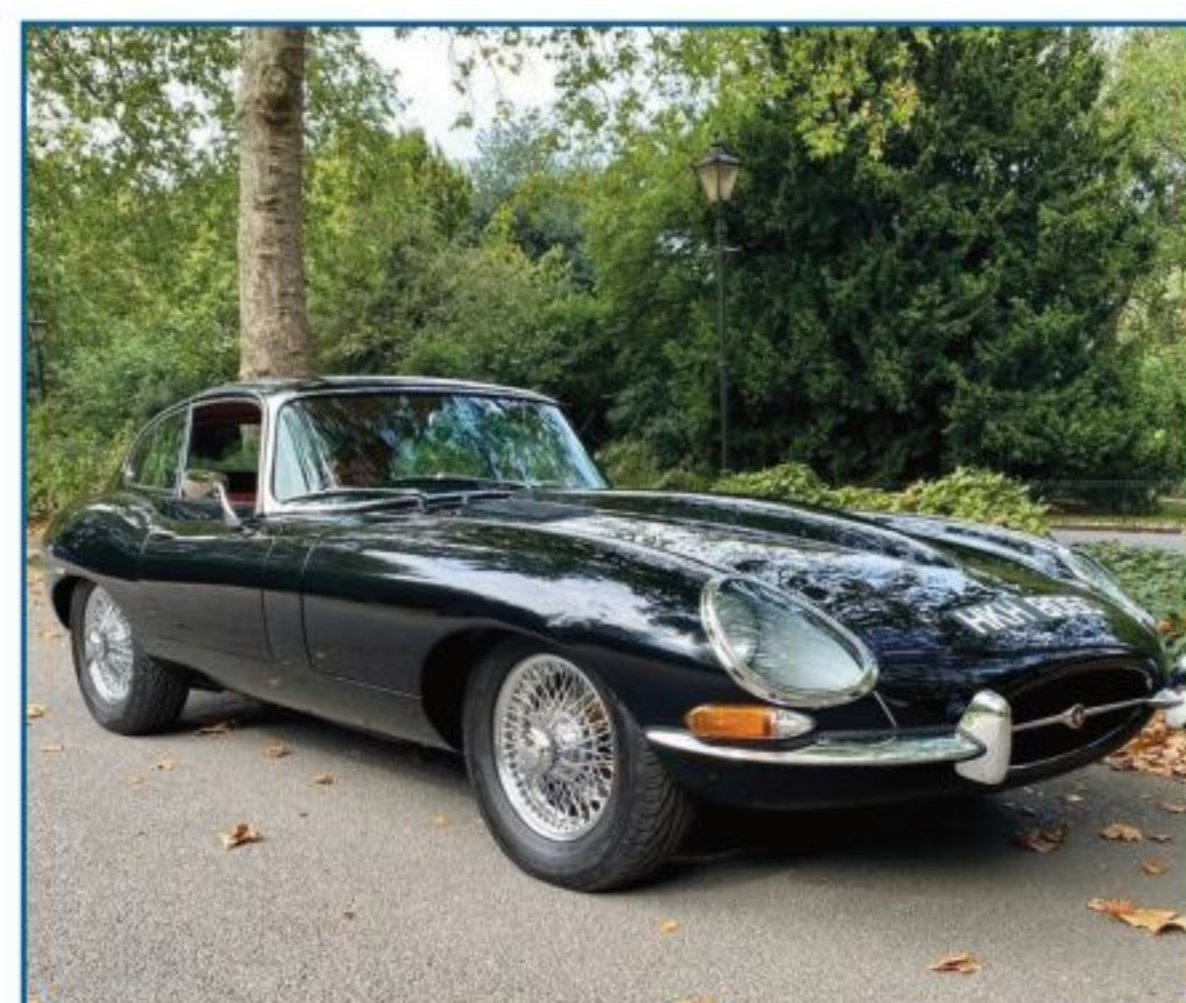
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That's Mazda price: the RX-7 FD was imported in small numbers; its value is on the up



BUYING GUIDE

Fast and curious

Unappreciated in its time, the Mazda RX-7 is now a rarity. But, as **Robert Ladbrook** discovers, it has a swathe of new admirers

MAZDA RX-7 FD

- **Price new** £35,000
- **Price now** £25,000-£50,000
- **Engine** 1.3-litre Wankel rotary with sequential twin turbocharging
- **Rivals** Porsche 911, Ferrari Testarossa, Dodge Viper
- **Verdict** A much-overlooked Japanese classic, which is coming into its own

IT SEEMS STRANGE TO CALL ANY OF Mazda's RX cars a rarity, but the RX-7 FD - the daddy of them all - is fast becoming a prized specimen, with prices beginning to match what Mazda always believed it could, albeit some 30 years too late.

OK, so the RX-7 as a general model isn't all that rare. Mazda had been building it in some shape or form since 1978 and produced over 800,000 in total, with the bulk sold domestically in Japan and Asia.

However, take a gander at how many RX-7s are in the UK and you'll find there were only around 500 on UK roads as of 2020, making the European spec RX-7 a far rarer sight than most Ferraris.

Despite being a fantastic piece of design, the RX-7 was hamstrung by poor pricing decisions, government taxes and limited imports. And now those three things are adding up to make the RX-7 a sought-after classic in its own right.

Original variants were all powered by the rotary Wankel engine, of which the brand had pioneered development since 1961, gradually refining Felix Wankel's original design to make it more powerful. The brand's ability to get close to 200bhp from an engine just over a litre in capacity made the powertrain perfect for a lightweight sports car, something capable of taking on Porsche, Ferrari and co in Europe.

So, after almost 750,000 mass-produced wedge-like early RX-7s, Mazda opted to revive the designation for one final flourish, the FD.

The car stuck to Mazda's core concept of a lightweight chassis and punchy engine. Its sleek bodywork was penned by Yoichi Sato and Wu-huang Chin, who worked on the MX-5. But to push the car upmarket it needed something special to match those good looks. That arrived in the form of an innovative twin-turbocharging system developed with Hitachi. By tackling the early lag that

had been the Wankel's weakness, Mazda created a car that flowed through the gears, backed by that banshee-like roar and a healthy 255bhp in base form. It looked superb, sounded brilliant, was hailed as one of the best driver's cars on its launch in 1992, yet barely sold. Why?

First off, Mazda's attempts to take on European brands led to the RX-7 gaining bulk, which put it above the Japanese car dimension laws, leading to domestic buyers having to fork out extra taxes to own one. Then in the UK Mazda launched the RX-7 at £32,000, which put it dangerously close to 911 money.

By 1995, only 210 RX-7s had been sold in the UK, and even Mazda lowering its price to £25,000 failed to provide a sales boost.

Ironically, the rise of computer games gave the car just that. Star appearances in titles such as *Need for Speed* and *Gran Turismo*, plus a key role in *The Fast and Furious* film franchise gave the RX-7 a cult following on the tuner scene.

Due to the car's rarity here, prices are on the rise, with original examples commanding good money. If you can find one of the lesser-spotted specials such as the Type R Bathurst, you can be looking at real Porsche money.



ONE FOR SALE

1996 RX-7 TYPE RS

Fresh from Japan, this is remarkably original. The owner says it's never even seen rain. **£30,000**, harlow-jap-autos.co.uk

DUNCAN HAMILTON *ROFGO*



1979 WILLIAMS-FORD FW07/01

Chassis 01 is the car that truly propelled Williams Grand Prix Engineering on their journey to becoming the second most successful Grand Prix team in the history of the sport, second only to Scuderia Ferrari. Debuting at Jarama in 1979 with Alan Jones, chassis 01 really found its speed at the British Grand Prix where Jones put the car on pole by a whopping 0.6 seconds, Williams' first ever pole. Leading the race by 20 seconds, a water pump failure robbed Jones of Williams' first ever win, thankfully Clay Regazzoni coming through to win in the sister car. Jones would finally get the win that he and chassis 01 deserved at the Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort – after an incredible battle with Gilles Villeneuve's Ferrari, eventually ending when the Canadian's deflating tyre flew off the rim, pitching him into a heart-stopping 360 degree spin inches from Jones. Podiums at Monza and Montréal capped off what should have been a championship-winning campaign for chassis 01 and Jones had it not been for the slow start to the season. Today chassis 01 remains one of the most original ground-effect Grand Prix cars, and comes complete with a beautiful book produced Jonathan Williams. It is also race-ready, having recently benefitted from a bare-tub rebuild and Geoff Richardson engine refresh, in preparation for Monaco Historique. An important piece of Grand Prix history with impeccable provenance.

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1973 BRM P160E.

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1960 BRM P48#2.

Making its debut in April 1960 at the international "100" at Aintree driven by Graham Hill, resulting in a 5th place finish. Fitted with the 2.5 litre straight 4-cylinder BRM engine. Mechanically the car was the same as the outgoing BRM P25 which were dismantled in period and used to build the new P48's. Best result in May 1960 at Silverstone taking a podium 3rd place driven by Graham Hill. Last entered the Historic Monaco Grand Prix in 2014. P.O.A.

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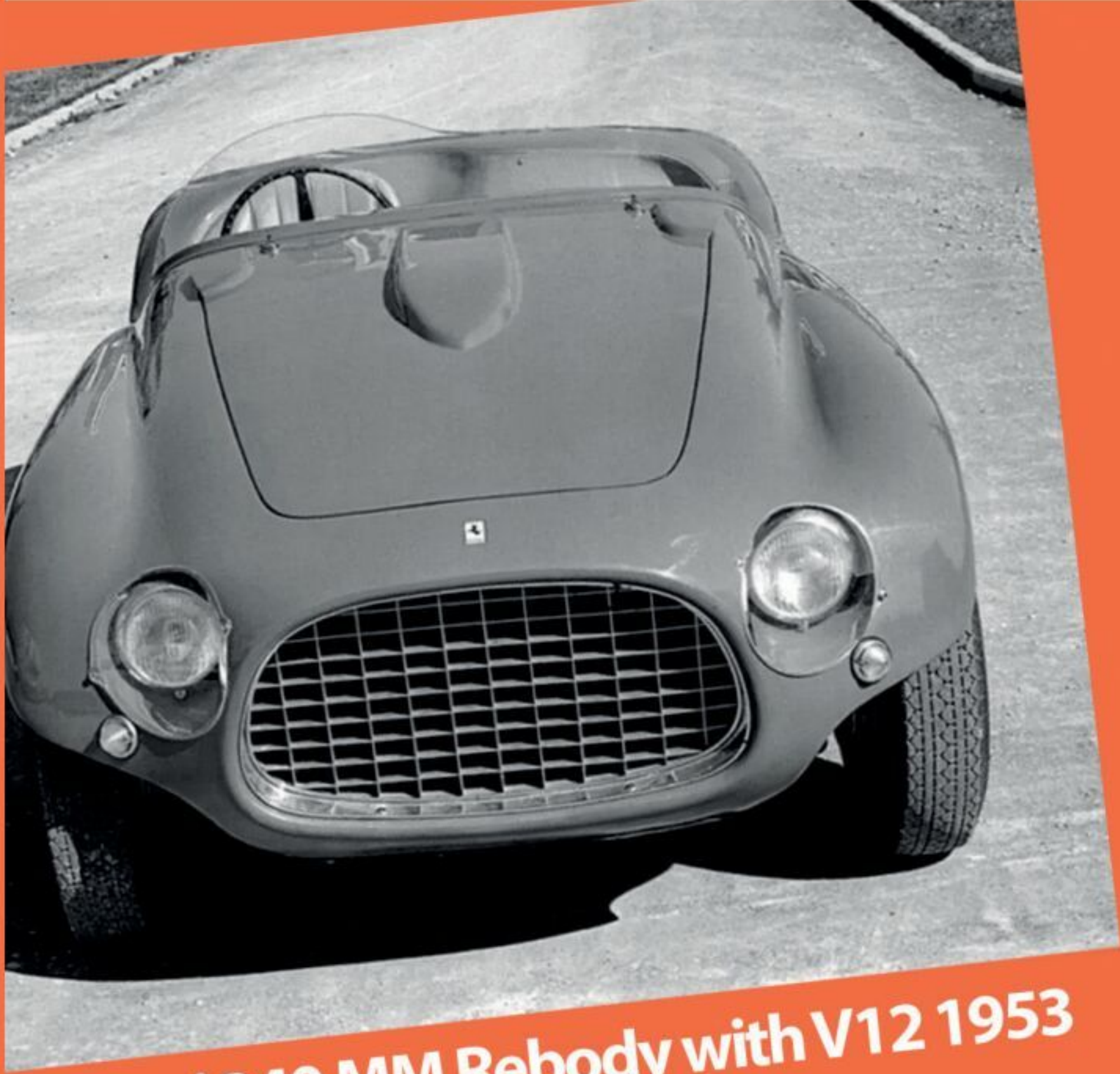
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One of Cars



Ferrari 340 MM Rebody with V12 1953



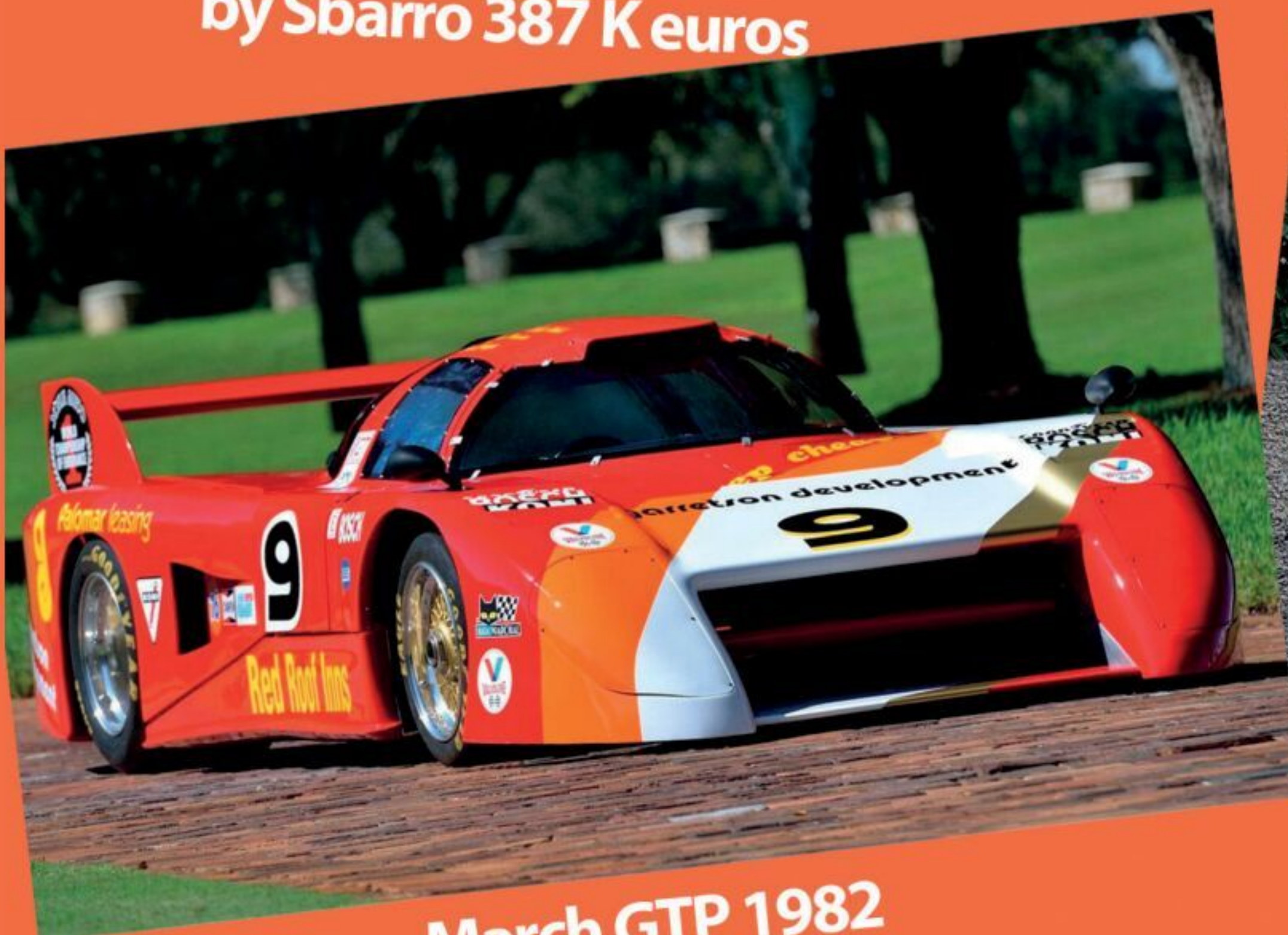
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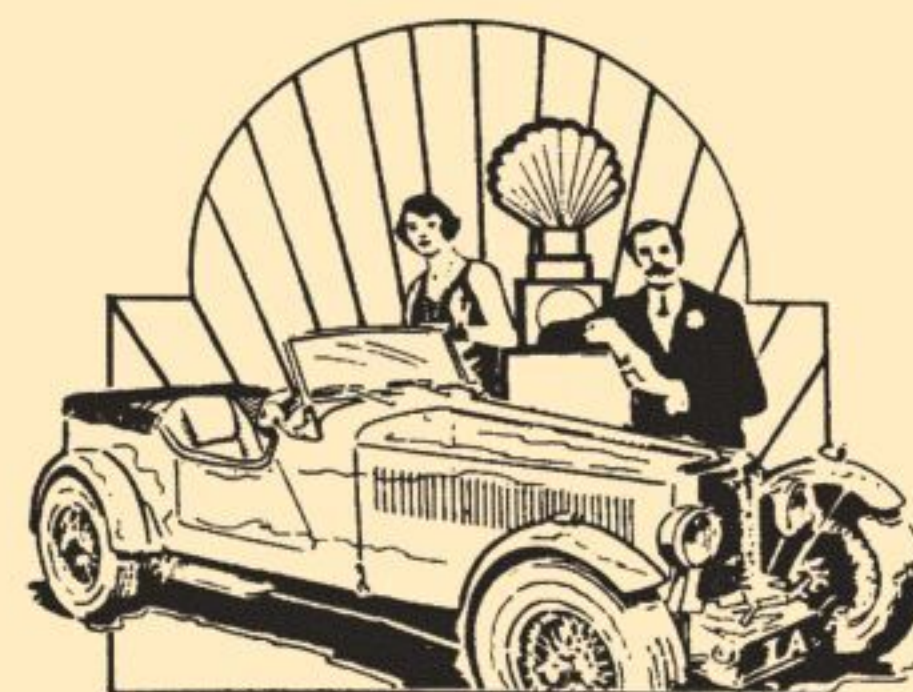
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THE RACER

Pit talk from the HRDC



HRDC RACES AT CASTLE COMBE

2021 COVID-19 UPDATE



Since the PM's delivery of his Roadmap to ease restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and having carefully considered the strict terms contained within his plan, the HRDC has jointly taken the decision with the Castle Combe Racing Club to postpone the re-scheduled date of 5th April for the abandoned October 2020 HRDC races until 30th August 2021 due to the fact that travel and overnight stays prior to the 12th April are illegal under the Government's Roadmap regulations.

For these reasons, The Castle Combe Racing Club has decided that their only course of action is to now limit the 5th April meeting to their own championships, which does not involve competitors attending from outside the circuit's area and will therefore enable CCRC competitors to access the meeting within the day and not have to find overnight accommodation.

The HRDC is a staunch supporter of the Government's campaign to 'Stay at home. Protect the NHS. Save lives'.

In the meantime, please:

STAY AT HOME. PROTECT THE NHS. SAVE LIVES.

Therefore expecting HRDC competitors from different age groups, vaccinated or not, from wide-ranging U.K destinations to travel, seek overnight accommodation and congregate in contravention of the PM's Roadmap is not an option that the HRDC will condone or support in any way. Other people's lives matter and that should be the mantra of all our competitors, however frustrated they may feel at this time about not being able to participate immediately in their chosen sport.

Having worked closely with the Castle Combe Racing Club and the owners of the circuit itself, the 30th August date has been chosen as the safest way to deliver these rescheduled HRDC races. With the Roadmap estimating that all COVID-19 restrictions will be fully lifted by 21st June 2021, we can all look forward to a hopefully sunny summer meeting at Castle Combe's evocative circuit, with full HRDC social race paddock facilities reinstated and some sensational HRDC on-track action.





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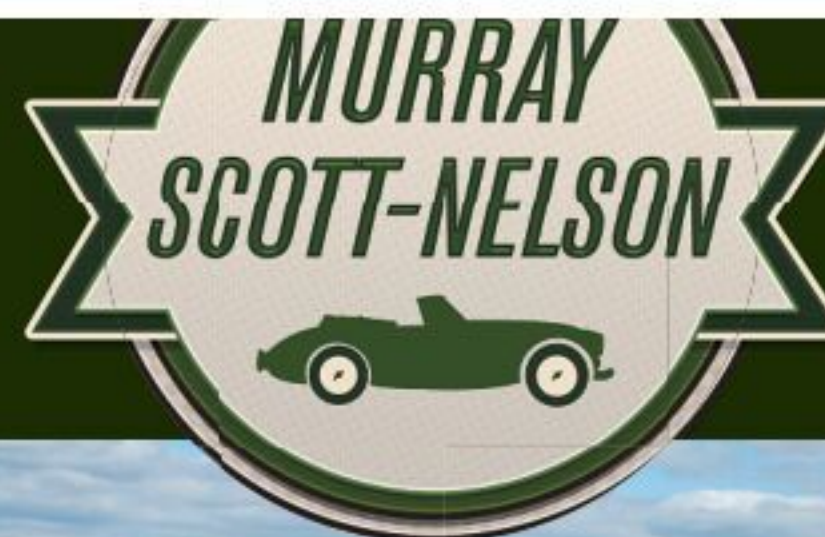


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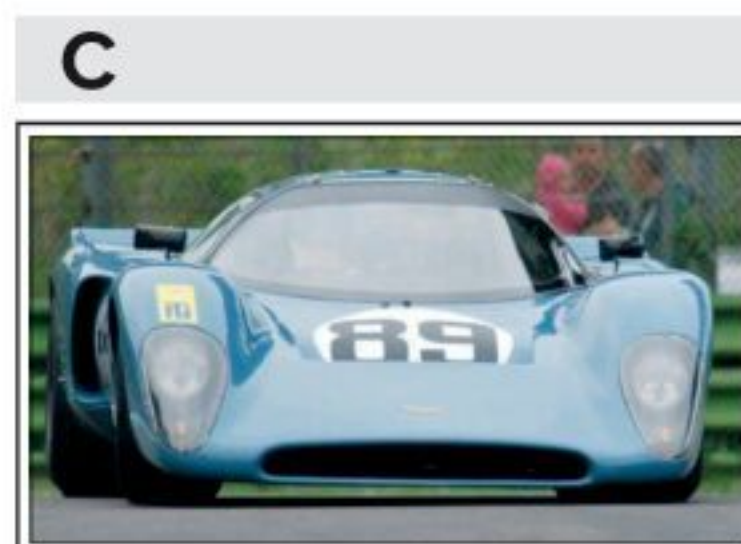
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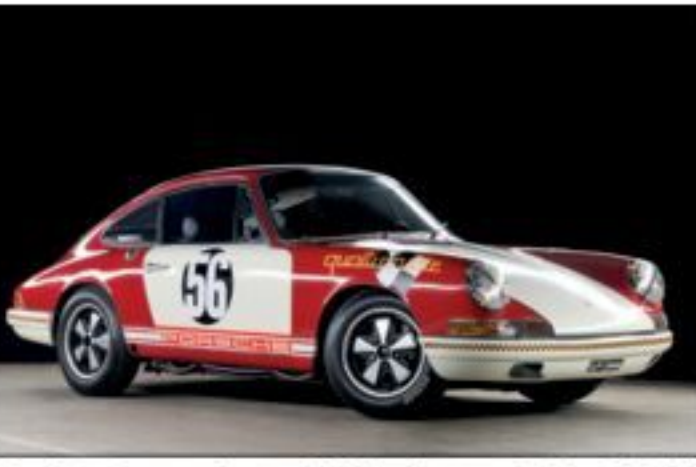

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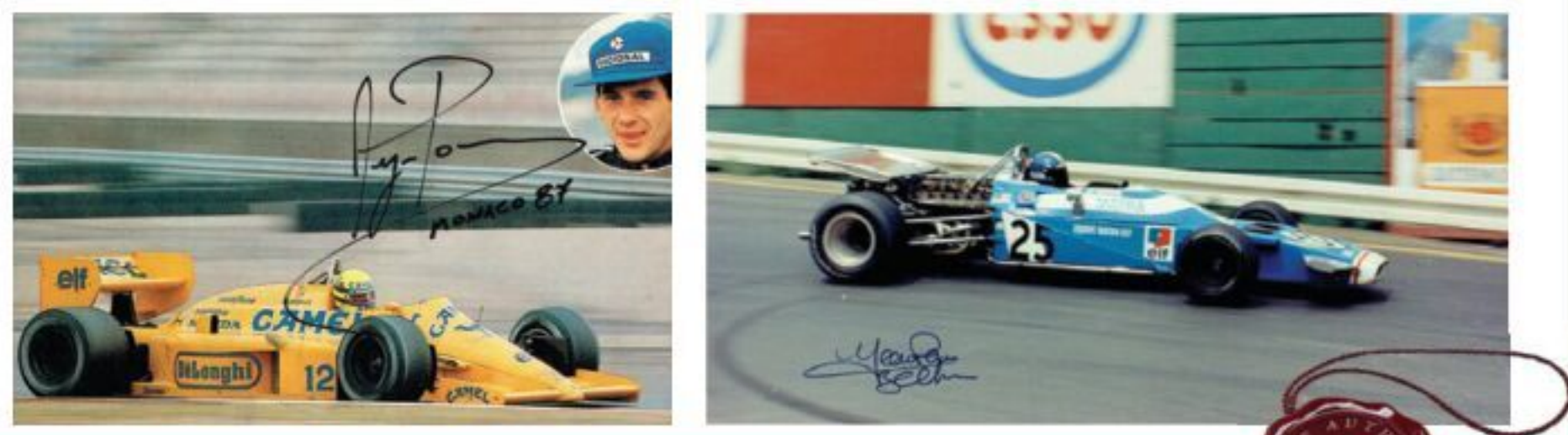
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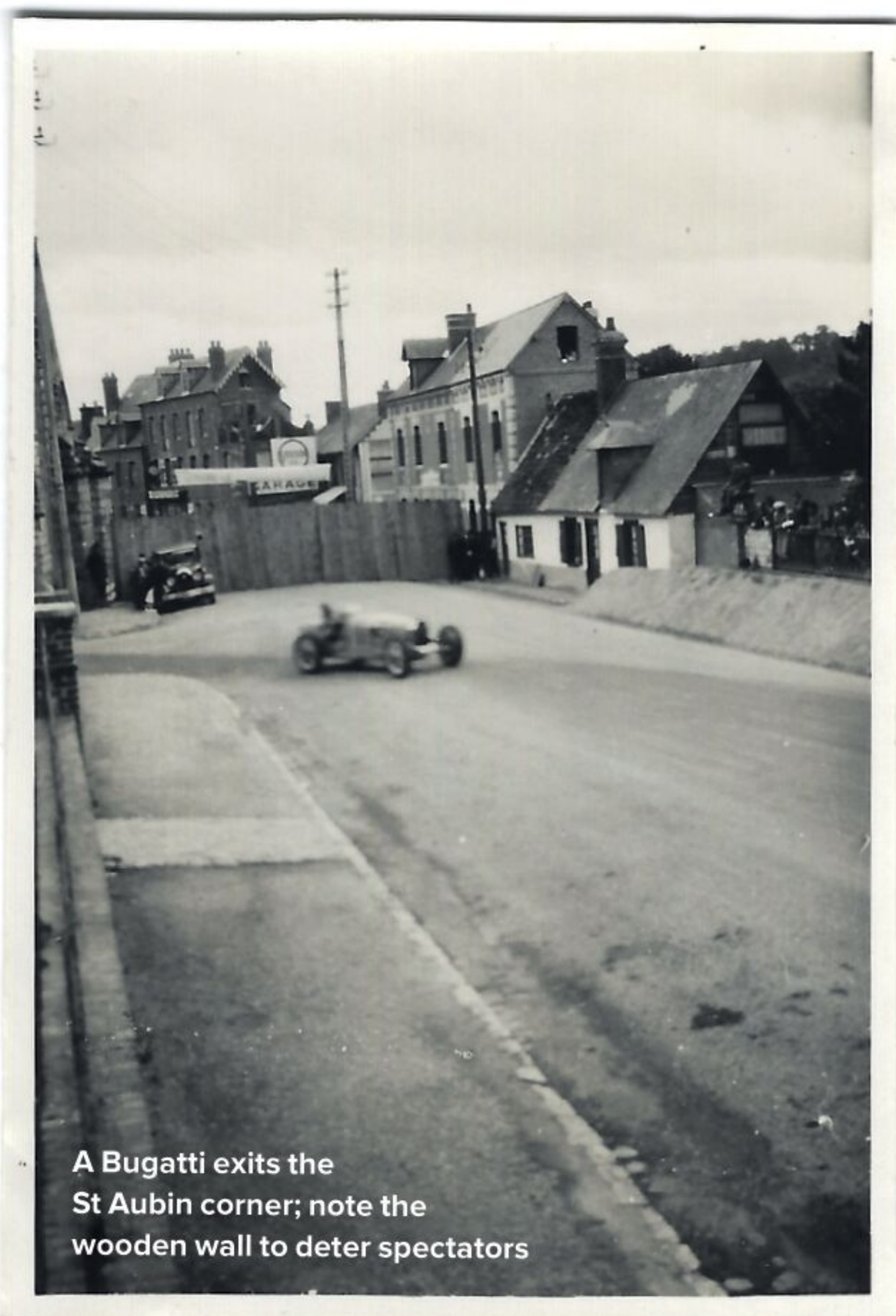
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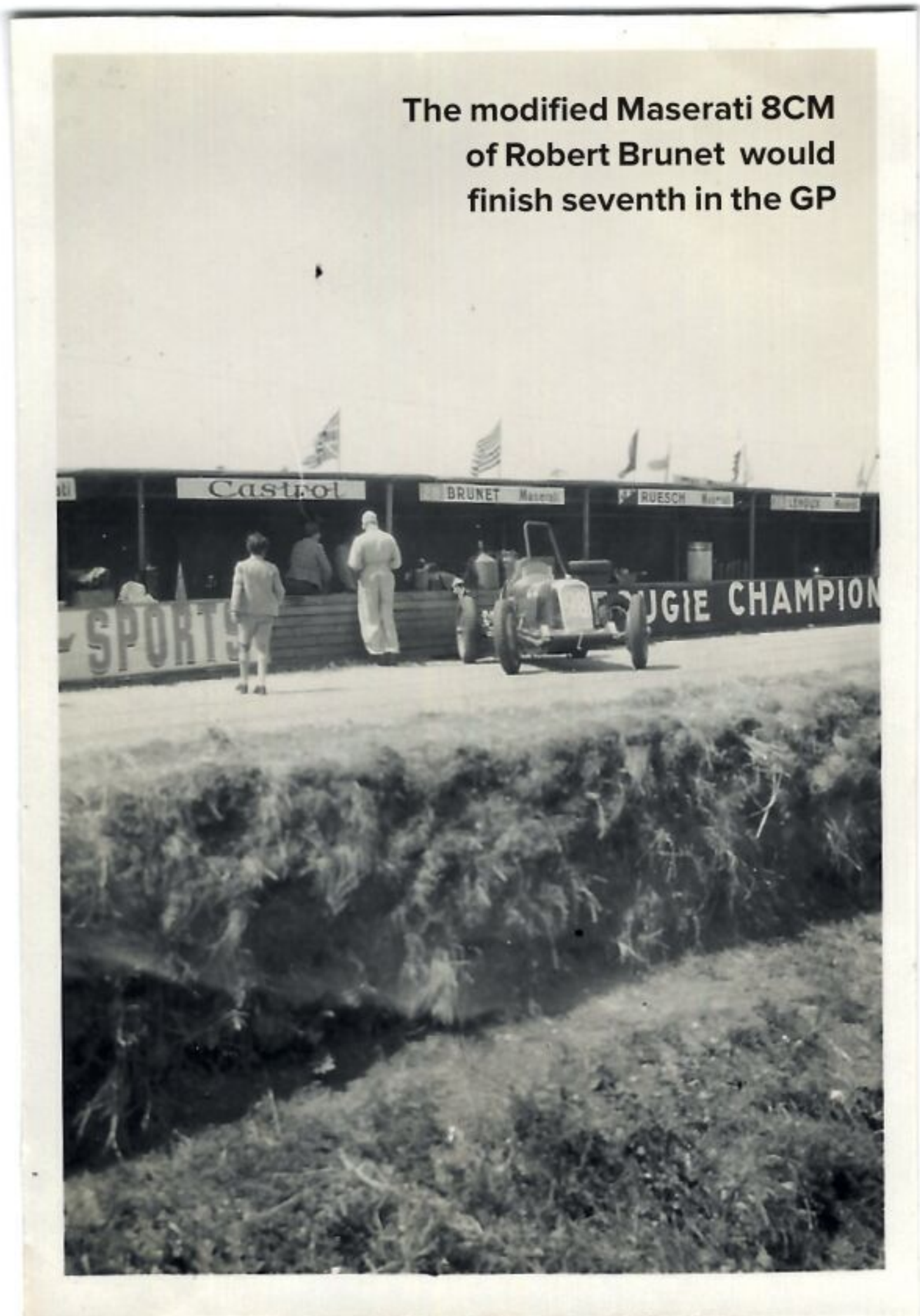
A Bugatti exits the St Aubin corner; note the wooden wall to deter spectators



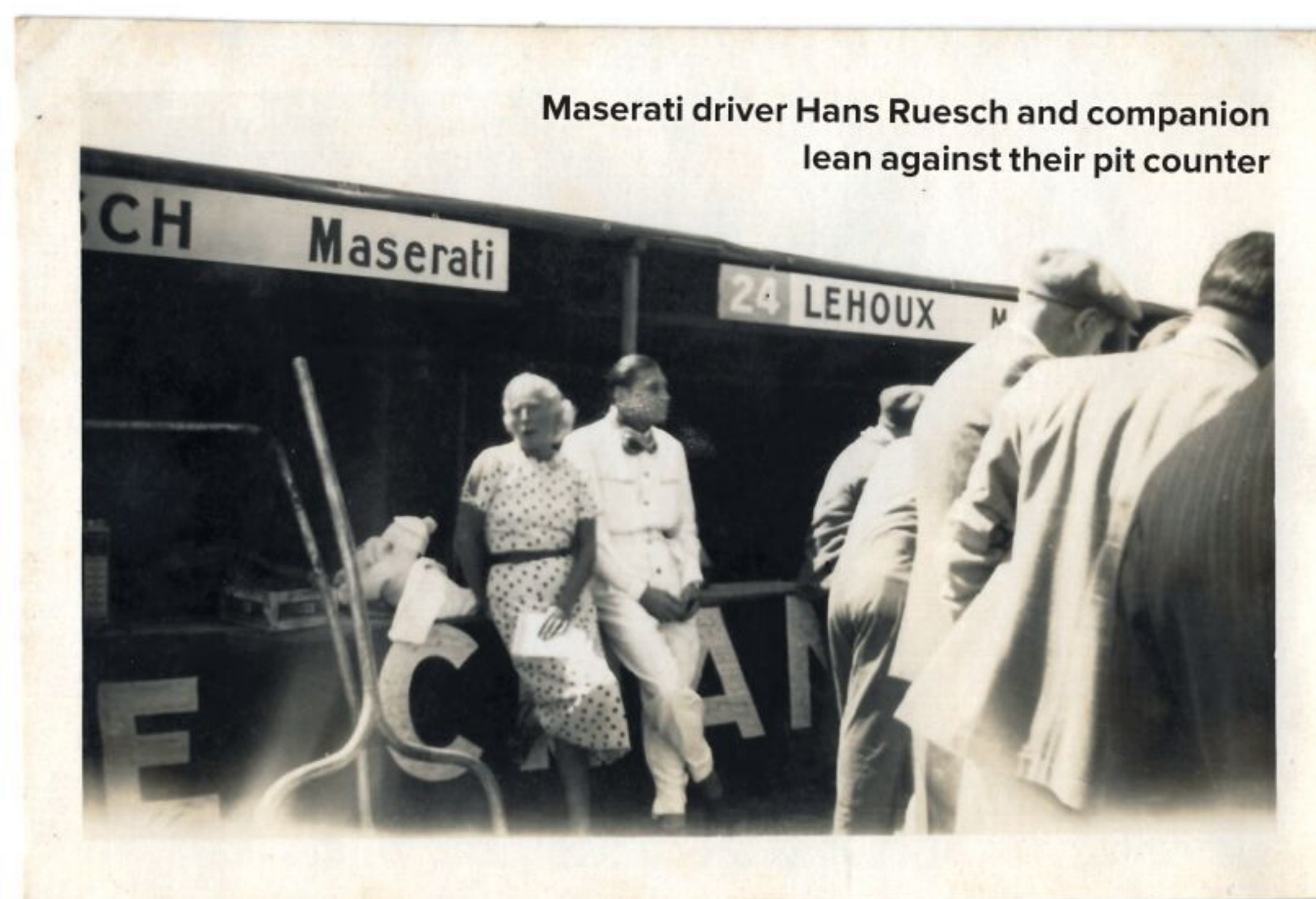
Louis Chiron in his Alfa Romeo Tipo B would contest the lead with team-mate Dreyfus but lose out by 15sec



Chiron was under the weather with flu, but if not for a quick stop to adjust brakes might have won



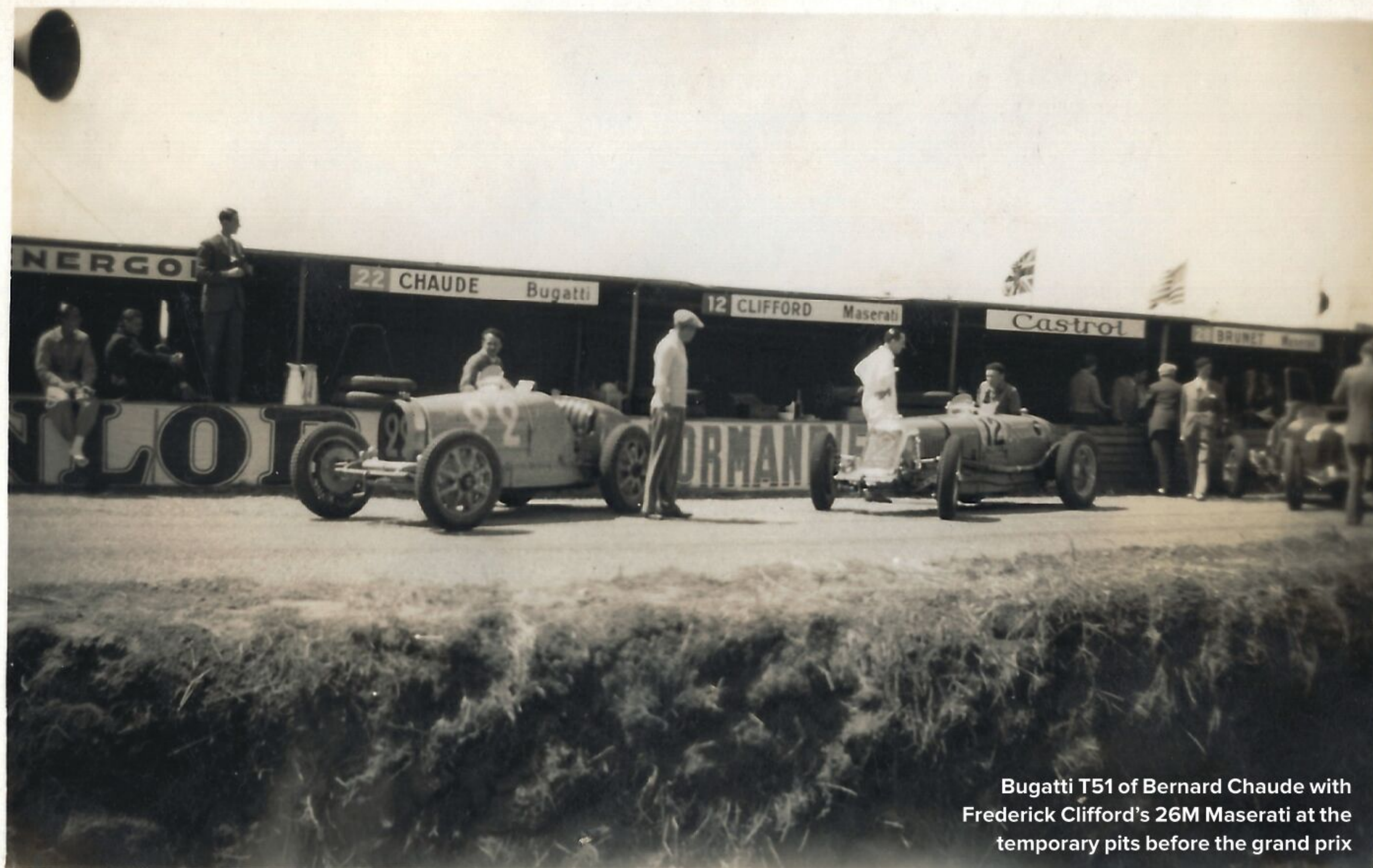
The modified Maserati 8CM of Robert Brunet would finish seventh in the GP



Maserati driver Hans Ruesch and companion lean against their pit counter

SEND US YOUR IMAGES

If you have any images that might be suitable for *You Were There*, send them to: **Motor Sport**, 18-20 Rosemont Road, London, NW3 6NE, or email: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk. Hi-res digital images preferred. Original images sent at owner's own risk. We can't return.



Bugatti T51 of Bernard Chaude with Frederick Clifford's 26M Maserati at the temporary pits before the grand prix

My uncle was there

No, **George Thompson** isn't old enough to have attended the 1935 Dieppe Grand Prix. These pictures are the work of his late uncle Anthony Butlin, who would have been 15 or 16 at the time. A voiturette race preceded the 3hr GP, run on an out-of-town course through St Aubin village



Driver briefing: Chiron (goggles on), Farina (arms crossed) between Zehender on his right and Lehoux. Far right, Richard Seaman, beside Ruesch



An ERA in the preceding voiturette race. Note kerbs, stone markers and deep ditch to trip the unwary





**MAY 12, 1957
NEAR ROME, ITALY**

Mille Miglia fans react to the red of Peter Collins' leading Ferrari 335S in this photo taken by co-driver Louis Klemantaski. With three competitors and nine spectators killed in this year, the race was then banned

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2008 Bentley GTC Mulliner finished in Peacock blue with Cream hide interior and having covered only 43,000 miles from new. Superb unmarked car. **£41,950**



1962 Bentley S2 Continental Convertible in its original configuration. Painstakingly restored to concours standard. One of only 62 right hand drive cars made by Park Ward and hence extremely rare. Unrepeatable at **£265,000**



1996 Bentley Continental "R" finished in Peacock blue with pale grey hide interior. 70,000 miles only and with the major Hydraulic service recently completed. Very much priced to sell at **£41,950**



2008 Aston Martin DB9 with optional Sport Pack, Onyx black with Obsidian black hide interior, 47,000 miles only, full service history, splendid condition and invigorating to drive. **£35,950**



2010 Aston Martin Rapide, finished in Meteorite Silver with Cream hide interior. Superb condition and very enjoyable for fast and comfortable continental Touring. Exceptionally good value at **£39,950**



2005 Aston Martin Vanquish "S" in Nero Daytona with Obsidian black hide interior. Only 33,000 miles with a complete service history and one of the best on offer. Stunning value at only **£79,950**



1955 Aston Martin DB2/4 finished in Burgundy with tan hide interior. Rebuilt 10 years ago by period Aston experts at Four Ashes Garage to fast road specification and a real joy to drive. Exceptional performance and only **£185,000**



1961 Aston Martin DB4 finished in period Aston Racing green. Fully restored by us in 1999 to a very high standard and remains to this day in excellent condition both visually and mechanically. Likely to prove to be a good investment at **£465,000**



1958 Aston Martin DB MkIII finished in Oxford Blue with Tan hide interior. This is a beautiful car with over £60,000 spent on upgrades and maintenance over the past 10 years. Wonderful classic motoring and not expensive at **£235,000**



1978 Aston Martin V8 Oscar India finished in Aegean Blue with stone beige hide interior. The subject of well documented regular maintenance, the result of which is a superb driving Classic Aston at an affordable price. Very attractive at **£129,950**



1997 Aston Martin Wide Bodied Virage Volante finished in Oxford Blue with cream hide interior piped blue, 22,000 only with comprehensive RSW history and in the same ownership since 1998. Fabulous throughout. **£89,950**



1971 Aston Martin DBS V8 in Signal red with cream hide interior and restored to near concours condition. This is a very collectable and very driveable classic 70's Aston that will be a joy to own and a potential investment at **£145,000**



1989 Mercedes 300SL (107) finished in pale metallic blue with blue interior and a new blue mohair soft top. Detailed service history and faultless to drive. Reduced to **£29,950 for quick sale**



1970 Jaguar E type 4.s Series II FHC finished in Carmen red with new condition black hide interior and sitting on perfect chrome wire wheels. Ideal for E type 60th anniversary celebrations this year. Inexpensive at **£69,950**



1990 Jaguar XJS V12 Convertible finished in Ice blue with contrasting dark blue mohair hood and mushroom hide interior. This is a 2 owner car with only 35,000 recorded miles and a full service history. Seriously good value at only **£27,500**



2002 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Coupe finished in Aston Racing Green with Forest green and parchment hide interior. 60,000 miles only with full Aston Service history, V600 rear light conversion, Great to drive and only **£26,950**

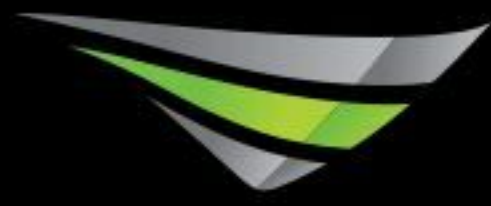


2003 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Coupe finished in Onyx Black with pale grey hide interior and 19" wheel upgrade. In excellent condition with just 52,000 recorded miles and a comprehensive service history. **£29,950**



2001 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante in rare Brackenbury Green with Forest Green and Parchment hide interior, Factory rear seat conversion, 61,000 miles with full history, fabulous condition and only **£29,950**

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